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**THE PROBLEM OF CHURCH UNION IN SOUTH INDIA
VILMOS VAJTA**

**THE LUTHERAN CHURCH AND
EPISCOPAL SUCCESSION RAGNAR ASKMARK**

**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM OF LANGUAGE
FOR THE CHURCH OF TODAY WILHELM HAHN**

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Luther on his part could see even in papal Rome the church of Christ because the Word was there. Where the Gospel is heard and where the sacraments are administered according to the institution of Christ there Christ himself forces his way through the covering of a false theology; in such congregations faith can listen and find the Gospel and cling to the promise of the Word. Naturally the responsibility to remove abuses in such a congregation continues and by means of clarity of preaching to make the message of the Scriptures clear to all. But a Lutheran theologian can never entertain the idea in the face of another church that something may be lacking which this church must obtain from us Lutherans. The Word has primacy over the church and members of another church also hear the Word; therefore they need merely to understand aright that which they already have. This freedom in relation to others is a gift of the Word. No one is so free and at the same time so firm as the person who is rooted in the Word.

The situation is completely changed as soon as the church or the ministry is placed above the Word. Then the foundation of the church's life no longer lies in what comes to the church from outside and creates the church, but this foundation is to be found already in the church, having been placed there by Christ once and for all. If then some congregation should have lost the succession somewhere along the way between Christ and the present, it can no longer receive the church's true and genuine life from the Word, nor even from Baptism or the Lord's Supper; what is lost is lost unless a legitimate ministry is obtained again from some denomination which had continued in the unbroken tradition.

Here we do not wish to enter into discussion with those European churches whose thoughts run along such paths. To carry on such a discussion would be a task in itself. But what should be emphasised here is something else; that is, that this conception of the ministry is *incompatible* with the central message of the Lutheran Reformation, it is *incompatible* with our Confessions, and there is no support whatever for it in the Bible.

Gustaf Wingren
Predikan. En principiell Studie

The Problem of Church Union in South India

It is a well-known fact that the modern ecumenical movement has been nurtured by the missionary task of world Christianity. The growth of the "younger churches" in Asia and Africa has pointed out the disunity of the church as one of the most evident wounds in the body of Christ. A call for Christian unity was, therefore, a demand for the effectiveness of mission work.¹ Naturally, the arrangement of comity, whereby different churches were assigned to different mission fields in the huge area of the non-Christian world, was already the beginning of such Christian unity attempts. This arrangement, however, could never result in more than cooperation among the Christian churches. The missionary situation demanded a united church according to the view of many on the field. They stated that the disunity of the church was a scandal in the eyes of the heathen, quite different from the scandal of the Cross. It was the disunity of the church, which hindered the success of the mission. One is, therefore, often reminded that the prayer of the Saviour "that they all may be one" concluded with the words "so that the world may believe" (John 17:21). The Christian church should "for the sake of the world" unite and so bear its unique witness with united effort.

In studying the problem of church union in South India, one is constantly faced with this argument.² The question of whether the prayer of our High Priest does or does not indicate an organized and visible unity of the church; whether this prayer can be used as an argument for creating more missionary effectiveness; or implies as a simple statement of fact that the oneness of Christ and his people will bring as a fruit "that the world may believe", can be left out of our discussion. The experience of the disharmony of the disunity of the churches and the missionary task of the church cannot be questioned. This argument also has a bearing upon the situation of the church in South India. The problem of church union in South India could thus be characterized as the lack of a united church in spite of the attempts of church union and the acceptance of the argument mentioned above.

Lutherans, working on the field in South India, have themselves faced the problem. They have, especially since the creation of the Church of South India, looked for a solution which also explored the possibility of a wider union than

¹ On younger churches and ecumenism see, for example, K. S. Latourette, "Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement" in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, London: 1954, esp. pp. 398-401.

² Among others C. Bindslev, "That they all may be one" in *Lutherans and Church Union*, Madras: 1948, p. 4; Arnold H. Legg, "The Visible Form of the Church's Unity" in *Unity in Faith and Love*, Madras: 1955, p. 83; L. Newbigin, *The Reunion of the Church*, London: 1948, p. 12ff; and also *The Constitution of the Church of South India*, Madras: 1953, p. 1f.

a confessional one. In this study we shall with special emphasis discuss the role of the Lutheran churches and the stand they have taken in this new situation.

"The fact of the Church of South India"

On September 27, 1947, the Church of South India was inaugurated in St. George's Cathedral, Madras.³ The inauguration service ended union negotiations of nearly three decades and began a new epoch in the life of the church which formerly had been three separate churches. It united in one church more than one million Christians of the Evangelical tradition. For some, the Church of South India (CSI) was the ecumenical pattern to be followed; for others, it was the challenge to a divided church. Viewpoints may differ in judging this event; nevertheless, the CSI has become an ecumenical issue. It did so because in a world of endless negotiations for Christian unity, the CSI became a fact, to which all future solutions of further union in South India must be related. How did this fact come into existence?

The years 1919 to 1947

There was a long course of negotiations, hopes, and disappointments, from 1919 to 1947, which prepared for the union embodied in the CSI.⁴

Thirty-three ministers of the Anglican and the South India United Churches⁵ met at Tranquebar, May 1-2, 1919; and being deeply concerned with the problem of the disunity of the church, drew up a statement which became the call to unity between these churches.⁶ The creation of the CSI was a result of the initiative of these men. In their statement, pointing to the large task of reconstruction after World War I, and especially the task of evangelizing India, they as individual members of the two churches recommended a union based upon the conservation of three elements, i. e. the Congregational, the Presbyterian, and the Episcopal. By accepting the historic episcopate as a fact—without any binding doctrinal interpretation on it—the manifesto visualized a union on the basis of (1) the Holy Scriptures, (2) the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds, and finally (3) the two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

This statement has tremendous importance not only as an historic document but also as a pattern in formal harmony with the Lambeth Quadrilateral, and

³ On further details see "Inauguration of Church Union in South India", Madras: 1947.

⁴ Bengt Sundkler, *Church of South India*, London: 1954, offers a complete history of the CSI. Shorter presentations by S. C. Neill in *Towards a United Church*, London: 1947, pp. 75-148, and in *Christian Partnership*, London: 1952, pp. 97-121.

⁵ The SIUC was formed in 1909 from Presbyterian and Congregationalist churches. See Sundkler, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-49.

⁶ The complete text is printed in *Documents on Christian Unity 1920-24*, ed. by G. K. A. Bell, London: 1924.

as such the basis upon which the final union was worked out. It is embarrassing to find that the outlines of union presented in the 1919 statement conform so closely with the "Basis of Union" for the CSI and as such incorporated as the "governing principles" in the constitution of CSI accepted by the new church.⁷ If the starting point and the final solution of the union endeavors had such similarities, one wonders what the ensuing twenty-eight years really dealt with and what the meaning of this delay actually was. It is certainly dangerous to generalize in answering this question. Nevertheless, one can say without exaggeration that the simple fact of delay was due to the difficulties which arose in connection with the acknowledgment of the ministry.⁸ This in turn was a typically Anglican difficulty, which questioned the validity of the non-episcopally ordained ministry of other traditions. On the one hand, Lambeth gave the pattern of the union; on the other hand, by the same pattern at the same time it hindered the realization of the union for nearly thirty years. The appearance of the Methodists may have played some role in this delay without really changing the course of the original discussion.⁹ Ten years after the meeting in Tranquebar, a scheme for union was prepared as the response of the churches to the manifesto of the thirty-three pastors. The 1929 Scheme laid down the same principles for union as had been suggested in 1919,¹⁰ although this first Scheme of the negotiating bodies was to be regarded as the official viewpoint of the churches. The debate on the basis of this suggestion of the Scheme was a long one. It resulted in several new editions until the final, seventh edition was prepared in 1941, which became, with minor changes, the Basis of Union and the Constitution of the Church of South India¹¹ approved by the negotiating churches. Thus, the Church of South India became a reality in 1947.

During this entire period of negotiation for the creation of church union in South India the Lutherans were passive. Did that mean that they did not follow the call issued from Tranquebar, the classical place of Lutheran missions? Some Lutherans took part in the Tranquebar meeting of 1919 without signing the statement. The only Lutheran body, which encouraged participation in the union negotiations, was the Danish Missionary Society. For some reason, nevertheless, their representatives never took part in such meetings.¹² What was the reason for such a development? Certainly not lack of interest in the unity of the church in South India. Paul Sandegren, one of the oldest Lutheran missionaries, has pointed to the fact of the creation of the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church the very year of the Tranquebar manifesto.¹³ It seems as though the problems of reconstruction of church life after World War I

⁷ *Constitution*, p. 68ff. pp. 1ff.

⁸ Sundkler, *op. cit.*, p. 131-156.

⁹ The "pressures of the Reformation" represented by the Basel missionary, A. Streckeisen, reported by Sundkler, pp. 275-300, were not delaying.

¹⁰ The 1929 scheme by Sundkler, pp. 168-173.

¹¹ *Scheme of Church Union in South India*, 7th ed. (revised), Madras: 1949.

¹² Sundkler, *op. cit.*, p. 154; cf. p. 376, note 36.

¹³ *Lutherans, Baptists and the Church of South India*, Madras: 1949, p. 17.

hindered tackling the problem of union among churches where difficulties arose in the acceptance of the Lutheran starting point for a debate on church union. Perhaps the condition of a doctrinal agreement for the sake of church union was too bluntly stated as including the acceptance of the doctrine of the Lutheran confessional writings.¹⁴ A conversation at that time between the Anglicans, Presbyterians and the Congregationalists on the one hand, and the Lutherans on the other, could be conceived as less hopeful from both sides. But it was the Lutherans who took the initiative a few months after the inauguration of the CSI to explore the possibilities of conversations with this new church.¹⁵

The method of union

Without Lutheran participation in the negotiations for church union in South India, the method of union followed by the CSI considerably differed from the method which the Lutheran church, on the basis of its understanding of Holy Scripture as interpreted in the confessional writings (especially Conf. Augustana, art. VII), would recommend for such a procedure. Such a general statement may already have its justification on the basis of what has been reported above on the developments between 1919 and 1947. One can easily see that the years of negotiation and theological debate in connection with it dealt mostly with the question of church order rather than with the common task of proclaiming the Gospel in its purity. This latter basis which the Lutheran church would suggest as the primary and decisive question for church union was seemingly no problem for the negotiators in South India. It was an easy solution to assume sufficient doctrinal unity instead of the penetrating theological conversation and attempt at unifying the coming church in its message, which it was supposed to bring to the world as its divine mission. Without questioning the truth of this presupposition of church union as created in the CSI, one can simply state as a fact that the evidence was not given *before* the union. Certain signs in this direction were only given when the CSI entered into doctrinal conversations with the Lutherans *after* the union which brought it into being.¹⁶

In fact, the method of doctrinal unity as preceding the inauguration of union was declined because "it was assumed without question that, over the greater part of the field of Christian doctrine, there was agreement between the churches concerned".¹⁷ In stating this, Bishop Hollis agrees to the possibility

¹⁴ Heinrich Meyer, "Auf dem Wege zu Lutherischer Kirchengemeinschaft in Indien", [On the way to Lutheran church unity in India] in *Lutherisches Missionsjahrbuch 1951-52*, p. 119; Sigfrid Estborn, "Lutherische and Südindische Kirche" in *Ökumenische Rundschau*, 1956, p. 13.

¹⁵ *Lutherans, Baptists and CSI*, p. 1.

¹⁶ For a more correct judgment on the CSI, fuller consideration for the development in the CSI *after* the inauguration must be given than by Carl F. Wislöff's "Der südindische Weg zur Kirchengemeinschaft", [The South Indian way to church unity], in *Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung*, 1956, pp. 137-143.

¹⁷ A. M. Hollis, "The Method of Unity with Special Reference to the Reaching of Doctrinal Agreement", reprint from *The South India Churchman*, 1955, p. 5.

that Lutheran participation in union negotiations might have helped avoid certain weaknesses created by the fact that the churches concerned "were not those most obviously theological".¹⁸ It is upon this background that one can understand Bishop Newbigin, one of the leading personalities of the CSI, who prefers to speak of the "reunion" of the church, thus regarding the united body as "truly parts of the Church".¹⁹ It should, however, be pointed out that a reunion as suggested in Newbigin's book is only possible between previously united churches. If the reason for their separation is no longer relevant and the unity among them regarding the Gospel is assumed, *then* (but pointedly *then*) the assertion of the division as sin can be meaningful. Otherwise, there will not be the question of reunion but simply union. The tendency to speak of every division in separate church organizations as sin and therefore calling for repentance lacks necessary clarity. For instance, if some Lutheran church would merge with an Anglican or Methodist church, this would never be a reunion since they have never been in one church-body previously nor has there been an excommunication between them. On the other hand, a merger between Anglican and Methodist churches could be characterized as a reunion of formerly one visible church. In any case, the Lutheran church would suggest that the *consensus de doctrina evangelii* should proceed union or reunion and not simply be assumed or even questioned as a true method of unity.²⁰

In forming the CSI, the evidence of doctrinal unity seems to have been put aside as a non-essential element for union because of the careful acceptance of different traditions in the life of the church. There could be no question of absorption, which would declare one of the uniting bodies the true church. The method of doctrinal subtraction was not congenial either. No other possibility was left than the acceptance of the churches as they were by an assumed and undefined doctrinal unity expressed only in the confession of the Holy Trinity.²¹

If the method of doctrinal agreement was not considered,²² the question must be asked about the method actually followed. Earlier in this discussion it was stated that the conditions of the Lambeth Quadrilateral and the Tranquebar statement upon which union was suggested were also decisive for the Basis of Union of the CSI. Instead of examining the four points of that suggestion, one is tempted to define the method of union in the CSI by mentioning two factors.

¹⁸ *idid.* p. 4.

¹⁹ Newbigin, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

²⁰ Wislöff, *loc. cit.*, p. 138.

²¹ *Constitution*, p. 5.

²² Hollis, *loc. cit.*, p. 4, "... there was never from the first any attempt to reach complete doctrinal agreement as a preliminary to union. There is, I believe, a justification for this, but it was worked out *ex post facto*, not consciously reasoned about at the beginning."

"The process of growing together"

This is characterized by the CSI itself: "The Church of South India recognizes that the act of union has initiated a process of growing together into one life and of advance towards complete spiritual unity."²³ In the documents of the CSI this conviction is repeated again and again in different terms. The CSI does not regard itself as a church which is complete and settled in every aspect. Just this position of not being a "static" church, well established in the world, but instead consciously relying upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is one of the most attractive traits which the CSI has. Its openness to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit as it may have been given to other churches has something of the character of the church as an *ecclesia in via*.²⁴ It is therefore quite adequate to put the heading "The End which is a Beginning" in the record of the inauguration of the CSI.²⁵

One is inclined to bring the whole life of the CSI under this heading. In the light of this statement the hesitation on doctrinal agreement could also be understood. The CSI seems to be unwilling to express, or better said, to pre-judge doctrinal decisions which may be taken in the future by the previously separated but now united bodies. Its incompleteness and expectation of the guidance of the Holy Spirit can also be applied to the area of the doctrine of the church, which for that very reason cannot be the uniting factor. The agreement on the Holy Scriptures "as containing all things necessary to salvation and as the supreme and decisive standard of faith" seems therefore to be a formal principle like the agreement to accept the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds.²⁶ Likewise, the statements on the two sacraments are confined to general terms. The paragraph on baptism, for example, does not take a stand in the question of infant or adult baptism nor does the paragraph on the Lord's Supper define the presence of Christ in the Holy Communion. Interpretation is wide open in both cases and the inadequacy of this fact shortly became evident in the conversations with the Baptists.²⁷ With regard to the creeds, freedom of interpretation is also maintained.²⁸ This raises the question of whether the variation of interpretation is limited at all apart from such heresy as the denial of the Trinity, which certainly is not left open to interpretation.²⁹ In this connection the authority of the creeds is certainly one of the points which the CSI must clarify not only in the interest of conversations with Lutherans but for its own clarity. There may be some doubt whether the CSI ever will be willing without

²³ Constitution, p. 12.

²⁴ Marcus Ward, *The Pilgrim Church. An account of the first Five Years of the Church of South India*, London: 1953.

²⁵ Sundkler, *op. cit.*, p. 339; cf. "Inauguration", pp. 6 and 29.

²⁶ Constitution, p. 4f.

²⁷ *Lutherans, Baptists and CSI*, p. 23f.

²⁸ Constitution, p. 72, note I; G. T. S. Garrett, *The Liturgy of the Church of South India*, Madras: 1955, p. 30f.

²⁹ Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 66. CSI theologians in their comments on the Doctrinal Statement of the Federation of Ev. Lutheran Churches have stated: "... fidelity to the revelation in Scripture would preclude union with any church which could not accept the truths witnessed to in the Nicene Creed".

some pressure from outside—such as, conversations with other churches or encounter with the first heresy in its own ranks—to draw up doctrinal limits for the interpretation of the Gospel. Obedience to the Holy Spirit nevertheless also includes such doctrinal limitations. Thus union attempts will be restricted against not only the non-Christian world but also the so-called Christian communions.

The CSI is purposely built upon the acceptance of a combination of different elements in the life of the universal church, i. e., the Presbyterian, Congregational and Episcopalian elements. By this it manifests comprehensiveness.³⁰ One is certainly interested to find out what the combination of these different elements actually means for the united church. It seems that the attempt would be more on the constitutional side than on the doctrinal. The attempt was made to consolidate the principles of these three traditions regarding church government giving proper attention to each. Therefore, the CSI has rightly become the pioneer in church union between episcopal and non-episcopal churches. The negotiations for the CSI wrestled with the question of harmonizing different church orders. When once the final scheme was found for the organizational question, the union became a reality. Bishop Hollis has stated, "Our method had been to reach sufficient agreement about the organization of the united church to allow the life in unity to begin . . ."³¹ He also referred to the late Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Temple, who had spoken of "union as a means to unity". This seems to have been the method of union followed in the CSI. On the assumption that necessary doctrinal unity already existed, an organizational unity was worked out to be used as the scaffolding for the unity which was to grow by mutual attempt. If anything can be regarded as "settled" in the CSI, then it is the combination of the three principles of church government.

There is a special guarantee in the CSI constitution with respect to these different traditions, namely, the so-called *Pledge*. It was formulated in the interest of furthering the process of growing together and reads as follows: "The Church of South India therefore pledges itself that it will at all times be careful not to allow any over-riding of conscience either by church authorities or, by majorities, and will not in any of its administrative acts knowingly transgress the long-established traditions of any of the churches from which it has been formed. Neither forms of worship or ritual, nor a ministry, to which they have not been accustomed, or to which they conscientiously object, will be imposed upon any congregation; and no arrangements with regard to these matters will knowingly be made, either generally or in particular cases, which would either offend the conscientious convictions of persons directly concerned, or which would hinder the development of complete unity within the Church or imperil its progress towards union with other churches."³² The Pledge refers to

³⁰ *Constitution*, p. 2.

³¹ Hollis, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

³² *Constitution*, p. 12; cf. "The Interpretation of the Pledge from 1954", *ibid.*, p. 89.

"traditions of any of the churches from which it has been formed" and mentions forms of worship or ritual and ministry as examples to which the Pledge should be related. Doctrines are not mentioned, although if there is any sense in speaking of the ministry in more than a purely technical way, this reference could be interpreted as an obligation of the CSI to tolerate ministries of the proclamation of the Gospel, which bring the message in different interpretations. This conclusion could also be drawn from the guarantee that any creed or confession formerly used in the uniting churches could be used after the union.³³

Bengt Sundkler calls the Pledge "the characteristically South Indian union device".³⁴ One has the right to interpret the Pledge from the special premise of the CSI, which regards the uniting bodies as "parts of the true church". In this case, however, the pledge seems to be nearly artificial in its assurance "not to allow any over-riding of conscience". Upon good evidence the Pledge could also be regarded as a church-political guarantee in order to convince hesitations before the union enterprise.³⁵ There is, nevertheless, one more important factor to be mentioned; namely, the opinion of the Indian Christians involved in the debate on union.

It has been recorded by the historians of the CSI that Indian opinion was somewhat impatient with the slow progress toward union. In facing the non-Christian world and the task of the church, they would have preferred immediate union. The Indian way was not favorable to organizational discussions or to doctrinal conversations. Certainly there was a fine Indian contribution in the negotiations for union, although the pressure from Indians, especially from the outside, on decision was very obvious. As an explanation the Hindu heritage of "tolerance" may be recalled. In Hindu religion this includes the amalgamation of world religions putting side by side Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius, and Christ without a feeling of conflict. If there is any claim the Hindu would refuse in religion, it is the exclusiveness and uniqueness of Christ as Saviour of the world.³⁶ Tolerance is a slogan for the Hindu. The Indian Christian is certainly affected by this age-long Indian tradition. Though his separation from the non-Christian world can be quite definite, the sense of the differences within Christianity is substituted by his call for tolerance. The 1919 manifesto of the thirty-three ministers already included a passage doubting the relevance of the divisions of the West for the Indian situation. The argument has never ceased to have its effect upon the negotiations for unity.³⁷ Bishop Neill explains it as coming out of a lack of understanding for the reality

³³ Assured in the Basis of Union, *Constitution*, p. 72, note III.

³⁴ Sundkler, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

³⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 160f, 257ff.

³⁶ *Christianity and the Asian Revolution*, ed. by Rajah B. Manikam, Madras: 1955, p. 123ff.

³⁷ Interesting expressions of the Indian opinion concerning the problem of church union are recorded by Sundkler, *op. cit.*, p. 204ff and by Neill, *Towards a United Church*, p. 89f. A criticism of Indian tolerance is given by S. W. Szavarimuthu, "The Relevance of Luther to the Indian Church" in *Lutherans and Church Union*, p. 47ff.

of history. Certainly the divisions in Christianity need an historic mind to be understood. Such knowledge would also reveal that divisions are not a speciality of the West but belong to the earliest Eastern development of the church as well. The lack of historical educational background results, nevertheless, in the lack of a critical mind, which one would suggest is the principle reason for Indian tolerance of widely differing and conflicting Christian traditions in the realm of one united church. The suggestion that the Pledge is an expression of this Indian tolerance could be an exaggeration. Yet together with other motives, this factor is of importance in the explanation of the meaning of this Pledge.

The historic episcopate

This became the second main factor in the method of union. At the inauguration of the CSI three of the bishops from the Anglican church consecrated the new bishops of the CSI after having themselves been accepted as bishops for the new united church. The Constitution lays down the following governing principle: "The Church of South India accepts and will maintain the historic episcopate in a constitutional form."³⁸ The specification of the episcopate "in a constitutional form" immediately raises the question of what is meant by historic episcopate. The correct interpretation seems to be that the CSI has recognized that the early church developed the episcopate in order to provide ministers of the Word of God and for the shepherding of the church. This episcopate seems, therefore, to be historic in the sense of belonging to the history of the early church. One of the uniting bodies, the Anglican church, has kept the continuity of the historic episcopate. Thus the episcopal element, which had been recognized as scriptural, was accepted as the constitutional basis of the new church. This was the contribution from the Anglican church to the union. Again, it may be correct to characterize this acceptance as technical in the sense that it has no doctrinal implications whatsoever for the CSI. In fact, such commitment is denied *expressis verbis* by the same constitution. The mere fact of the historic episcopate is good enough; its interpretation is left free. The necessary qualification of the ministry is a fact, but the interpretation of episcopal ordination is not. "In making this provision for episcopal ordination and consecration, the Church of South India declares that it is its intention and determination in this manner to secure the unification of the ministry, but that this does not involve any judgment upon the validity or regularity of any other form of the ministry, and the fact that other churches do not follow the rule of episcopal ordination will not in itself preclude it from holding relations of communion and fellowship with them."³⁹

³⁸ Constitution, p. 9.

³⁹ *ibid.*, p. 10f.

There seems to be a contradiction in the measure taken on the role of the historic episcopate. On the one hand, it does not question the regularity and validity of other churches' ministry without episcopal ordination. On the other hand, in the CSI itself, provision is made for the "unification of the ministry" just on the basis of the historic episcopate.

One must express the following observation: either the validity expressed with regard to other ministries is a true statement, in which case a unification of the ministry within the CSI does not make sense; or the necessity of unification of the ministry is accepted, in which case the validity of the other ministries is simply questioned. How can one accept communion and fellowship with other churches if there is the conviction in the background that their ministries are not unified? Is it possible to apply standards for a unified ministry *within* a church other than the standards for a unified ministry in the relations of one church to another? We raise this question on the basis of the premises within the CSI regarding the ministry. In that context the qualifications for a unified ministry are formulated from the acceptance of the historic episcopate. In a Scriptural context a unified ministry would mean the one service (ministerium) of the Word of God. In that case the unity of the ministry is safeguarded in the commission of the one Lord to proclaim the one Gospel. In the context of the CSI constitution the unification of the ministry means the qualifications of the ministers. This Scriptural dimension of the ministry never does appear in the CSI. It is a result of the Anglican concept ruling the discussions on the ministry. The contradiction in the CSI constitution is due to the acceptance of the Anglican premises. The "non-episcopalians" seem to have been satisfied by the "episcopalians'" assurance of not questioning their ministry. The "episcopalians", on the other hand, were satisfied with the intention of the "unification of the ministry" by episcopal ordination.

Such development was also safeguarded by the *period of thirty years*, during which time the ministry of the CSI successively is to become episcopally ordained in its entirety.⁴⁰ Unfortunately, the thirty years' provision does not aim toward a change to the scriptural concept. After this period the decision put before the church will be the *modus* of acceptance of ministers coming from "non-episcopal" traditions for work in the CSI. Although the validity and regularity of their ministry is not judged according to the assurances of the Constitution, their service in the CSI could depend upon a new episcopal ordination since the CSI will then have an episcopally ordained ministry.

The decision after the thirty years' period cannot be prejudged. However, the development in the CSI has shown that a considerable appreciation of the episcopacy has been the result, which has strengthened the position of episcopacy. M. Ward in giving an account of the first five years in the united church

⁴⁰ The suggestion of a thirty-year provision is also Anglican in its origin and interestingly goes back to 1919. See Sundkler, p. 161f.

⁴¹ Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

states "that the choice of episcopacy proved to be right."⁴¹ An Indian representative of the CSI has expressed the hope that the pattern of episcopacy, introduced to the CSI as the revival of the episcopacy from the second century, would present a challenge to divided Christianity.⁴² In this appreciation of the episcopate the personalities of the present bishops have certainly played their roles. A recent declaration of the CSI representatives on the CSI-Lutheran joint theological commission has indicated "the reasons which make it seem to us unlikely that we shall be led to abandon the historic episcopate."⁴³

After the presentation of this characteristic of the Church of South India, one question can be asked and now more readily be answered and understood.

Is the CSI a manifestation of the unity of the church?

There is no doubt that the CSI by uniting the three different, formerly separated churches wishes to bring the unity of the church into visible manifestation. The question is only whether this intention could be a reality through the method of union which was used as the basis for the establishment of the union called the Church of South India.

We have seen several statements implying that there was an inner unity present in the uniting bodies, although this unity has never been defined. Whether these can prove to be right is not within the scope of this discussion. Spiritual life cannot be measured by theological analysis alone. Instead we would formulate the question thus: Does the CSI as presented in its constitution, theology, and interpreters, manifest a unity which is more than an organizational one?

In answering this question one may point to the following circumstances:

1. The CSI has given formal acceptance to the Holy Scriptures and the two ancient creeds. Nevertheless, freedom of interpretation has been given which proves that *the CSI does not demand full doctrinal unity.*

2. The CSI in its constitution has promised to do all in its power to attain intercommunion. Nevertheless, the Pledge leaves open the possibility of the denial of intercommunion among the congregations of the same church. Certainly, the act of inauguration has commissioned the bishops and the ministers to all congregations of the united church. In an additional interpretation of the Pledge this right was defended. The veto of *congregations could* however *hinder in practice the principle of intercommunion.*

3. At the inauguration of the CSI the ministries of the united church were equally recognized for the ministry of the Word and Sacraments in all the

⁴² David Chellappa, "The Challenge of the Church of South India" in *The Indian Journal of Theology*, 1952, p. 6.

⁴³ Minutes of the CSI Lutheran Joint Theological Commission meeting, 1956, p. 8.

congregations of the new church. However, the constitution foresees the „unification of the ministry“, thereby indicating that in spite of the mutual commissioning of the ministers, *the ministry of the CSI is not completely acknowledged* until episcopal ordination has reached every minister.

Is the CSI with its unclarified doctrine, with the possibility of a divided communion table, and a ministry not wholly acknowledged, the manifestation of the unity of the church? Those who defend the scheme of union of the CSI would themselves admit that this unity has not yet been attained. Instead, they point to the divided shape of the universal church and the consequently illogical constitution which such a church necessarily will establish.⁴⁴ But (and this “but” would certainly be an emphatic conclusion to this characteristic) the CSI is also a church which could provide in divided Christianity the opportunity for a united effort in the proclamation of the Gospel, in intercommunion, and in church order. Objective observers of this scheme and the life of the church could not possibly deny this. Nor could they deny that the CSI is a venture of faith to establish unity and to manifest it in the midst of a divided Christianity.

The critical analysis given above might even raise the question whether the CSI is a church at all? Would it not be more adequate to speak instead of a federation of churches on the way to establishing unity. In fact, is not the name “The Church of South India” a projection of a reality to come? Some may deny the name of church in such a context. The CSI chose the opposite. It has thereby created the “fact of the Church of South India” (Sundkler). The church union thus created was quite different from union known up to then. As a result, it also became an ecumenical issue of great importance. It has been presented as a church which “has the idea of development written into its very constitution . . . The Church of South India confesses that it is not yet the Church in the full sense which the word ‘Church’ ought to have. It confesses itself to be on the road, and it makes a claim to be on the right road, but it does not pretend to have arrived.”⁴⁵ The evidence of this claim was to be proved.

The encounter between the CSI and the Lutherans

The Lutheran church was the first to react to the challenge presented by the fact of the CSI. In December 1947 the Federation of the Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India passed a resolution to the end that a Committee on Ecumenical Relations should “study present day ecumenic problems within India” and “if necessary (to) represent the FELC in any preliminary exchange of views with the Church of South India.”⁴⁶ The CSI at its first synod acted in the same direction, extending invitations to other churches in South India.

⁴⁴ Newbigin, *op. cit.*, p. 121; Legg, *loc. cit.*, p. 102.

⁴⁵ A. M. Hollis in *The Nature of the Church*, ed. by R. Newton Flew, London: 1952, p. 221.

⁴⁶ *Lutherans, Baptists and CSI*, p. 1.

A United Evangelical Lutheran Church of India?

The FELCI had been established in 1926 in the place of the All India Lutheran Conference which had as its purpose the cooperation of the missionary enterprises of the Lutheran churches in India. Among its objectives the FELCI stated: they "aim at the unification of the Lutherans in India in a United Evangelical Lutheran Church."⁴⁷ Was there any progress between 1926 and 1947? There was no immediate attempt to organize a united church. The greatest event before the Second World War was the "Book of Worship of The Lutheran Churches in India",⁴⁸ which was authorized by the FELCI and used at its meetings. Here was an attempt for unity in worship. It was after the Second World War that a proposal for a constitution for the United Lutheran Church was presented to the Federation and through it to the member churches. In working for a constitution the Lutheran churches soon found that unity could be manifested only on the basis of the common confession of the church. It was quite natural that the Lutheran churches turned to the confessional writings in their history in order to find the expression of their common faith. In the constitutions of the Lutheran churches in India, references are made to these confessional writings as the doctrinal basis for the church, second as references only to the Holy Scriptures and the ecumenical Creeds (including also the Athanasian, which is not mentioned by the CSI).⁴⁹

In seeking unity there was, nevertheless, a strong feeling among the Indians that the confessional documents of the West would only be true expressions for the faith of the church in India if the Indians themselves could comprehend their faith in their own theological terms and in their own theological situation, especially when facing the non-Christian world. The result of these considerations was the *Doctrinal Statement Presenting the Confessional Basis of the Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India*.⁵⁰ The first edition was published in 1949. After careful study in the member churches the Doctrinal Statement was accepted in its final form by the Triennial Conference of the FELC in 1951.

Apart from the purpose of declaring the common faith of the Lutheran church, the Doctrinal Statement was also suggested as the basis for theological discussion with the CSI. In this way it was a document for unity in creating the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of India and also in creating wider unity which was envisioned by the Lutherans. A detailed theological analysis must be omitted from this study. In the context of the problem of church union in South India we should focus our attention on the question of how this

⁴⁷ *The Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India*, Madras: 1952, p. 1. The history of the FELCI is told by Swavelly in *The Lutheran Enterprise in India*, Madras: 1952, p. 243ff.

⁴⁸ Guntur, 1936.

⁴⁹ This is also the basis for membership in the FELCI.

⁵⁰ The German translation included in Heinrich Meyer's *Bekenntnisbindung und Bekenntnisbildung in jungen Kirchen* [Being bound to a confession and the creation of confessions in younger churches], Gütersloh: 1953, p. 41-73, has interesting explanatory footnotes, especially when they refer to the relevance of the Doctrinal Statement to the Indian scene.

Doctrinal Statement, being the common confession of the Indian Lutherans, visualized the unity of the church.

In preparing a special confession for India, the Doctrinal Statement emphasizes its "complete unison with our Lutheran fathers" (page 5). The Statement is, however, prepared in the conviction that for the manifestation of the unity of the church only a fresh confession born out of the special situation could satisfy. "Recognition of the confessional books as an obediently faithful exposition of the divine truth does not relieve us of the obligation to guide and guard the church in our place and time by an equally faithful exposition of the truth revealed in the Holy Scriptures" (ibid.). In its paragraph on "The Church", the Doctrinal Statement points out the necessity of manifesting the oneness in Christ by the "oneness of mind with regard to basic doctrines which are of the essence of the Gospel and quite clearly taught by the Word of God . . ." (p. 22). A list of such basic doctrines is also found in the same article.

In spite of this common confessional basis accepted by the Lutheran churches in India, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of India has still not become a reality. Does this mean that there is something lacking in the manifestation of unity in Christ? If such a question is directed to the Indians, they would explain that the lack of one united Lutheran church has no real importance in the communion and fellowship of the Lutheran churches. In fact, one has to think of India as a continent of several languages and of huge distances. A central church organization for the entire country would hinder more than further administration. The Lutheran churches in India work in different parts of the country without overlapping each other's territory. This means that a central organization of Lutheran churches is not an urgent matter. It seems, therefore, to be understandable that unity between the Lutheran churches in South India and the CSI could count upon more advance and also more promise than a unity between the Lutheran churches in India from the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church in the South to the Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Church in the North.

The process of organizational unity between the Lutherans in India is extremely slow in becoming a reality, if it ever does become a reality. But according to the Lutheran confessions (including the Indian Doctrinal Statement), those factors which hinder an organizational unity are by no means essential for the manifestation of the true unity of the church. Lutherans in India today have arrived at a common confessional basis; they have never questioned their fellowship at the Lord's Table or the acknowledgement of the ministry in their organizationally separate bodies. They have created a Federation which includes churches among which no reasons exist for declaring full church-fellowship. It has not been expressly declared as far as the different constitutions of the Lutheran churches in India are concerned. But it also has not been denied. Intercommunion is practiced as an expression of unity in Christ.

If the name "church" can be questioned when applied in the fullest sense to the CSI, one may say that the name "Federation" is by no means fully relevant for the relation of the FELC member churches to one another. If the central organization of separate territorial churches does not belong to the essential manifestation of the unity of the church but can be substituted by autonomous bodies having jurisdiction over separate territories, then *the FELCI is certainly more than a "federation"*. It is a federation with church-fellowship, although this could possibly be more definitely formulated in its constitution. The way to a United Evangelical Lutheran Church of India with fully autonomous territorial churches is by no means a Utopia. On the other hand, an organizational unity is not an urgent demand among churches with common confessional basis, with intercommunion, and with mutual acknowledgement of their ministry. Therefore, they should have been able to act in unity when they met with the CSI.

The third partner in the conversations

However, the invitation of the CSI to other churches in South India was also responded to by the Baptists. They were willing to enter as the third partner in the conversation. Accordingly, conversations on the question of wider union began between Lutherans, Baptists and the CSI in 1948 and were carried on into 1949. The interest of the Baptists was perhaps no surprise, when we realize that the Baptists are partners in the plans for church union in Ceylon and in North India.⁵¹ Nevertheless, this fact immediately raised questions of basic importance. Certainly the controversy between the Baptist doctrine on "believer's baptism" could present a stumbling block for any church union with them. But the main question has become whether the Baptists could consider church union at all in accordance with their teaching on the nature of the church. Baptists maintain the independence of every congregation and can hardly act as a "church", i. e. as a united body of congregations. In obedience to their traditional doctrine on the church, they have no authority above the local congregation, which lives for itself, although it confesses oneness in Spirit with others. Consequently, the suggestion of the Baptist delegation for more conversations included firstly the question: "What is the practical value of organic union as one church? Would some form of federation as Christian *blocs* be more expedient?"⁵² For the Lutherans and the CSI these questions did not cause any difficulty. It was clear, however, that Baptist participation

⁵¹ S. C. Neill, "Plans of Union and Reunion 1910-1958" in *The History of the Ecumenical Movement*, pp. 476-79; J. R. Nelson, "Survey of Church Union Negotiations" in *Ecumenical Review*, Vol. VIII, 1955, p. 77.

⁵² *Lutherans, Baptists and CSI*, p. 6.

would depend on whether the Baptists themselves could find a solution to their dilemma. It was not likely that the CSI or the Lutherans would seriously discuss the independent view. From the Holy Scriptures they were convinced that the *ecclesia* in the local congregation was a manifestation of the totality to which it belonged in *koinonia*. The decision of the first meeting among the three partners to the conversations was to study the following subjects: (1) The relation of doctrinal and confessional statements to the nature of the church. (2) The relation of the personal experience of conversion to the nature of the church (including the question of infant and adult Baptism). (3) The nature of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. (4) The question of authority in the church (including the question of episcopacy).⁵³

A second meeting of the Lutherans, Baptists and the CSI produced agreed statements on the proposed study subjects (1) and (3). The first one was later accepted by the CSI and the FELC; the second never received the same authorization. Continued discussions on the Lord's Supper led to fuller agreement in 1955 between the Lutherans and the CSI. At this second meeting of the theological commission, the Baptist participation in the conversations became more complicated. The Lutherans suggested separate discussions with the CSI and the interchurch group acting on behalf of the three churches decided not to continue in conversations with the Baptists until they sent a more representative delegation. In 1949 therefore the Baptists withdrew as the third partner. The Lutherans and the CSI continued their conversations on a new basis.

Doctrinal discussions as a means to unity

In 1949 the Lutherans prepared the first edition of the Doctrinal Statement. Copies were also sent to the Church of South India representatives for study and comment. As before, the CSI was not quite satisfied with the method suggested by the Lutherans. At its initiative the CSI granted freedom of interpretation of the Creeds and also provided special safeguards in the Pledge not to "override consciences by majority vote." In a special suggestion answering the Doctrinal Statement of the Lutherans, the CSI expressed fear of legally binding the church in doctrine. Instead, they suggested that "mutual love is the bond of union. It follows that any union between *churches* must be based on love and trust rather than reliance upon legally binding instruments. Without the Holy Spirit neither uniformity of organization nor agreement in doctrine can create or maintain Christian unity."⁵⁴ When agreeing to come together in organic union, the following indispensable elements in the visible

⁵³ *ibid.*, p. 8.

⁵⁴ Ward, *op. cit.* p. 65.

structure of the church were suggested: the Holy Scriptures, the two Sacraments, a ministry "carrying the greatest possible degree of authority and acceptance", and finally a common life in which the different gifts of the Holy Spirit are accepted in the building up the body of Christ.

The last suggestion is interesting because it presents a new element not found in the original scheme of the CSI. Here the "process of growing together" is clearly a step toward becoming a basic element for church union. "We have learned from experience that in drawing up a Constitution it is better to trust in the Holy Spirit as ready to lead, and in each other as ready to be led by Him, than to seek to provide detailed safeguards for every conceivable emergency."⁵⁵ Taking these factors into consideration, the CSI criticized the Doctrinal Statement of the Lutherans. It pointed especially to its failure at several points to give true Scriptural expression to the Christian truth.

At this point it would be wrong to conclude that continuation of the conversations was blocked by the CSI statement. Having expressed their reservation against a legalistic use and a one-sided intellectual interpretation of the confessions, the CSI, nevertheless, accepted the Doctrinal Statement of the Lutherans as a basis of continued discussion with the hope "that the document might prove a useful means by which to test their oneness of mind with the Lutherans as to the meaning of the Christian faith."⁵⁶ There can be good reason for the CSI reservation. It can also be assumed that it did not affect the CSI's official acceptance of the agreement of 1949 regarding the relation of doctrinal and confessional statements to the being of the church. The last thesis of the agreement declared: "Agreement regarding the basic doctrines which are of the essence of the Gospel is the prerequisite of union between churches. However, the basis for the unity of the Church is oneness in the Lord Himself. The responsibility of deciding in any particular case whether the necessary doctrinal agreement exists rests upon the living Church as led by the Holy Spirit."⁵⁷

This agreement on the process of church union was promising for future conversations. In fact, it opened new perspectives in the encounter with the CSI. It is no exaggeration to say that the conversations between the joint theological commission of the CSI and the Lutherans by the acceptance of the Lutheran conviction for union proceedings revealed new traits in the CSI, previously unknown both in its union negotiations and constitution. It would be difficult to decide whether the doctrinal unity of the CSI, which resulted in agreed statements with the Lutherans during the following years, had been an inherent feature before conversations with the Lutherans, whether it had developed under pressure of the Lutherans, or whether it was the natural outcome of their "growing together." Indications would suggest that the CSI had not planned to proceed in the direction of doctrinal unity at once. Lutheran persistency for such a method in manifesting the unity of the church may definitely

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p. 67.

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, p. 63.

⁵⁷ *More Conversations between Lutherans, Baptists and the Church of South India*, Madras: 1950, p. 17.

have played a role. Thereby, the prospect of eventually reaching church union between the Lutherans and the CSI had at least received encouraging support.⁵⁸

The 1951 meeting of the joint theological commission focused its program on finding evidence of doctrinal agreement on the following subjects: (1) Is external union essential to the church? (2) The Word and the question of authority in the church. (3) The Law and the Gospel. (4) The Union of the Christian with Christ. (5) The Doctrine of Election. (6) The Person and work of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁹ Meetings of the joint commission were held from 1953 to 1956 to carry out this program, during which time these subjects became somewhat changed. Very important was the renewed discussion on the Sacraments and the two first problems with regard to the nature of the church and its ministry, especially the role of the historic episcopate. This was the question which proved to be the first stumbling block at the 1956 meeting, in an otherwise promising atmosphere of negotiations.⁶⁰

In the course of the discussion agreed statements were issued on the doctrine of Election, Law and Gospel, and the Lord's Supper. No agreements were issued on other doctrines on the program, since agreement by presentation of papers on the subjects was evident. The only exception was the problem of the nature of the church and the historic episcopate.⁶¹

A theological analysis of the agreements, as well as other material presented for the discussions of the theologians in South India, would be an interesting study. The wide range of dogmatic problems included justify a special study of each problem. But within the framework of this article no attempt can be made at such theological appraisal. One could restrict remarks to the fact that a representative selection of problems upon which church divisions have been based and therefore which church unions must necessarily overcome has been taken up by these conversations. At the same time it should be pointed out that agreements issued do not pretend to be "full doctrinal statements".⁶² It seems as though the agreements would reflect more the problems which effected church union in India than an attempt to settle the dogmatic problems generally involved in each subject. Therefore, for the reader, objective appraisal of the course of discussions and their results should not be measured by general problems. The Indians indicated themselves that fuller statements would be possible. They have, nevertheless, foreseen discussions with the special problem of church union in India. The controversial theological problems of the West, although certainly represented in churches grown up on the witness

⁵⁸ Cf. H. W. Gensichen, "Conversation between the CSI and the Federation of the Evangelical Lutheran Churches of India" in LUTHERAN WORLD, Vol. II, No. 1, 1955, pp. 74-78, and "Südindisches Abendmahlsgespräch" [South Indian Conversation on the Lord's Supper] in *Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung*, 1956, pp. 126-130.

⁵⁹ Minutes of CSI-Lutheran Joint Theological Commission, 1951, p. 3.

⁶⁰ See the report by Gensichen in this issue of LUTHERAN WORLD, under "India"; see also Minutes of the CSI-Lutheran Joint Theological Commission 1956.

⁶¹ Papers submitted to this commission during the meetings are printed in the following volumes: *The Holy Spirit and the Life in Christ*, Madras: 1953; *Unity in Faith and Life*, Madras: 1955; *The Sacraments*, Madras: 1956.

⁶² Minutes of the CSI-Lutheran Joint Theological Commission, 1955, p. 4.

of Westerners, did not have the same relevance for the Indian scene. One has no right to blame Indian discussions for not raising problems which have not effected church union in India directly. It is only right that the agreements should be Indian agreements for the purpose of creating church union in their field. To miss the formulations of the confessional writings of the Reformation period is therefore a claim which seems to be out of order as far as the situation in India is concerned.

The West has no right to blame the Indians when their theological discussions do not solve the problems raised in the West. They did not attempt to do so. They simply wanted to solve the disunity as it had appeared among themselves. The only correct method in dealing with the church union problem in South India is to listen to *their* problem and possibly give some advice to help solve it, without referring to the implication of the history of theology on the doctrine in general. There is a difference between doctrinal conversations and agreements for church union on the one side and full dogmatic penetration on the other.

Having refrained from theological analysis, we must face the fact that according to the Indians, agreement has been reached on such basic questions that the condition of the doctrinal unity as a prerequisite to the church union seems to have been satisfactorily met. At least this was a fact until the 1955 meeting of the Joint Commission.⁶³ The problem which faced the commission was the possible manifestation of such an agreement.

Agreement—and then?

The question was earlier discussed in this setting "Is visible external unity of the church of the essence of the church?"⁶⁴ In answering this question the problem of the ministry and the historic episcopate has again and again turned up as *the* problem for church union according to the suggestion of the CSI. The differences at this point created the stumbling block for the 1956 meeting.

The CSI and the Lutherans in earlier discussions likewise refused to talk of an inner, spiritual unity without external expression. There was no further discussion or agreement as to whether the historic episcopacy accepted in a "constitutional form" could be such an external expression. It seems that at the last meeting these two different viewpoints on external unity came into serious conflict. From the Lutheran point of view the doctrinal agreement could be characterized as the extreme expression of the unity of the church. Such an agreement is a visible manifestation that the proclamation of the

⁶³ Minutes from 1953, 1954, and 1955 repeatedly stated that the measure of doctrinal agreement between them was such as to warrant closer fellowship. Limited intercommunion and practical suggestions for cooperation were suggested.

⁶⁴ *Unity in Faith and Life*, pp. 73–102.

Gospel is exercised with one mind, in agreement with the mind of Christ and that even the Sacraments are administered in the oneness of Christ according to his institution. According to this Lutheran view, the unity of the church has its external expression in the audible Word and the visible Sacraments, that is the *ministerium verbi divini*. Lutherans would be able to agree that the unified ministry so interpreted belonged to the essential unity of the church. Their protest begins if a supplement would be attached as a qualification of the *ministers*. In harmony with the Holy Scriptures Lutherans would defend the thesis that the only qualification of the ministers is the practicing of the *ministerium verbi divini*. This is *jure divino*. A minister may have the qualification of an angel, but if he does not proclaim the Gospel, he is anathema (Gal. 1:8). Certainly, some kind of recognition should be given to each minister. He will be sent to exercise the *ministerium verbi divini*. This sending (*missio*) will come to him through men as God's representatives, whether they are bishops or presbyters. The New Testament does not fix a pattern of church order, although it has as a rule the sending.

It is with this background in mind that one has to understand the confessional writings of the Lutheran church which classify church order as belonging to the human traditions which may vary and change. In harmony with this Lutheran viewpoint, the Lutheran delegation at its first meeting with the CSI expressed in a statement that "with reference to the questions on the historic episcopacy, the ordination of ministers by bishops, and the acceptance of ministers by either body, it appears to us that there is nothing *a priori* upon which agreement cannot be reached."⁶⁵ One would honestly hope that eight years later the Lutherans were of the same opinion when asking the CSI "for a clear statement on the theological basis of the historic episcopate" and at the same time wanting clarity whether "the CSI would be willing to enter negotiations for union with an open mind without demanding the acceptance of the Historic Episcopate as a pre-condition of negotiations."⁶⁶ It would certainly be irresponsible of churches following the Confessio Augustana to demand of another church refusal of the historic episcopate for the sake of church union. Such a demand would be still more embarrassing in the context of South India, where the largest Lutheran church since its establishment has accepted the historic episcopate because of its relationship with the Church of Sweden. It is not a question of the CSI's willingness to negotiate without demanding acceptance of the historic episcopate. Rather, the question is whether the CSI is willing to give recognition to other church orders as legally sent to the exercise of the *ministerium verbi divini*. Evidence of such a willingness would be shown 1) if for the initiation of church union with the Lutheran church, the CSI acknowledged its ministry without any attempt at "supplemental ordination" and 2) if the same practice is kept in the future for the acceptance of

⁶⁵ *Lutherans, Baptists and CSI*, p. 5.

⁶⁶ *Minutes*, 1956, p. 3.

ministers ordained by Lutheran churches, although episcopal ordination would be established as a rule.

Evidence of an acceptance concerning the first point was already given at the inauguration of the present CSI. The only factor which questions the application of this is the hesitancy to establish the same rule—without the provision of thirty years—for the future. As long as this discrepancy expressed in the thought on the “unification of the ministry” is upheld by the CSI, evidence for the second point is lacking. Certainly one should be ready to remember the repeated assurances of the CSI delegates on the recognition of other ministries. Their recommendation of the historic episcopate as a gift which they have increasingly learned to value should not invalidate this.⁶⁷

What then is the difficulty which made agreement with regard to this question impossible between the CSI and the Lutherans at least for the present. The minutes of the meeting and the short comments by one of the Lutheran delegates, Dr. Gensichen, do not give any explanation. However, there is one observation which may have its importance in this connection.

We have observed that the decisive feature in the CSI's acceptance of a church union is more a “process of growing together” than a definite goal as the end product of the “growing together.” One phrase which returns again and again is that the CSI expects the guidance of the Holy Spirit. No one knows the ways of the Holy Spirit and therefore nothing can be said about the final development of the CSI; that is, after the period of thirty years. This “aimlessness” of the Pilgrim Church is characterized by an entire dependence on the work of the Holy Spirit. From this observation one is inclined to explain the unwillingness of the CSI to bind the development of “growing together” at the present moment.

On the other hand, there is one point where the CSI's growth seems to be definite. This regards the *continuity of the church in the historic episcopate* as an accepted fact. According to its constitution, at the end of the thirty-year period the CSI will not examine the question of whether the episcopacy should be maintained but only decide upon the acceptance of non-episcopally ordained ministers offering their service to the CSI.⁶⁸

One can understand why in the course of these discussions the Lutherans had difficulty in accepting such a conception. It was not because they have less faith in the guidance of the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, to a certain degree their insistence upon unity in the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacrament is in defense of the work of the Holy Spirit. According to the Lutheran interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, the *continuity of the church* is expressed by the means which the Holy Spirit uses, namely,

⁶⁷ See the special statement of the CSI delegation on the historic episcopate at the 1956 meeting. The text is quoted by Gensichen in this issue of LUTHERAN WORLD, under “India”.

⁶⁸ According to Newbigin in *The Reunion of the Church*, p. 122, the provision of thirty years is only a postponement of the original intention to have an episcopally ordained ministry.

in the Word and the Sacraments. The history of the church is not to be understood as a new revelation which creates new insights essential for the life of the church and for its unity. The truth to be revealed by the Holy Spirit is the same historic fact of the incarnate Son of God (John 16:12–15). The Spirit was promised to lead into this Christ by the Word, the washing of regeneration and the communion in the body and blood of the redeeming Christ. The church may be *in via*, its faith may grow; but *the work of the Holy Spirit has its constant element throughout the centuries; namely, dogma and confession.*⁶⁹ They are in a biblical sense expressions of the work of the Spirit and by no means mere intellectual exercises. They have a liturgical more than a logical character. They are worship. Lutherans in our day may have forgotten much of this original concept. Nevertheless, in their insistence upon "*consensus de doctrina*" and upon "confessional statements" they are bearers of this Biblical heritage.

Whether these related considerations have any bearing on the crisis in the CSI-Lutherans discussion, one can not say at the moment. However, in relation to the CSI-Lutheran conversation as a whole they certainly have. The pause in the conversations, which seems to be the situation at present, will probably help both parties in *rethinking the problem of church union in South India.*

The CSI may during this time of silent meditation reexamine whether it has used the gift of the historic episcopate as the decisive factor in creating church union. It should also ask the question whether its encounter with the Lutherans leading to several doctrinal clarifications in interpreting and proclaiming the Gospel has enriched its life and could promise a joint manifestation of the oneness in Christ with the Lutherans.

The Lutherans on their part should examine whether they at a decisive point in the conversations have made use of the Lutheran freedom concerning church order. They may also meditate on the question of what their doctrinal agreements with the CSI have really meant? Were they an illusion which needs theological correction? If agreement was a reality, how can they then deny moving towards church union with the CSI, at the same time having a good conscience in having followed the method confessed in Augustana VII. These are questions which will present a dilemma for the Lutherans. In their decision they need the confidence and trust of their brethren in other parts of the world. They may want to use the advice of their brethren. But the decision should be their own. We should only pray that the meeting in 1956 will not be the last word on this issue.

Church union in South India is really a *problem*. It should be dealt with in that sense. Neither an optimistic appraisal nor "comprehensiveness" can offer the real solution. The Lutherans and the CSI by their conversations have

⁶⁹ W. Elert, *Der christliche Glaube* [The Christian Faith], 3rd ed., Hamburg: 1956, p. 35ff.

neither arrived at church fellowship nor arrived at an excommunication of each other. In fact, they have shown real signs upon which a union between them could be based. In the final analysis it may be to the benefit of the manifestation of the unity of the church in South India that these two churches choose this relationship until that time when union could become an expression of the real unity in Christ.

[The Holy Spirit] . . . calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and preserves it in union with him in the true faith . . .

Luther's Small Catechism

The Lutheran Church and Episcopal Succession

The doctrine of the *successio apostolica* was formed at an early date in the church, on the basis of a series of questions with which the church was faced after the second century.

These questions were partly concerned with doctrine and proclamation. What does a correct interpretation of the Holy Scriptures mean? Which of the many possible interpretations is the right one? How can the church know that it is she, not the sects, who has the interpretation which conforms to the Scriptures?

Other questions were concerned with the administration of the sacraments. What is the guarantee that the church possesses true and effective sacraments?

And connected with these two questions is the question concerning the church itself. Where is the true church? What is the distinguishing mark of the true church of Christ?

If the church answered these questions by pointing to the fact that she possessed the genuine office of the ministry, then the basic question was, how can the church in fact know that? On what does the authority of her ministry rest?

In this connection it is not our task to show how it came about that the early church from Irenaeus on answered these questions by saying that the bishops were the successors of the Apostles and thus holders of the genuine office of the ministry on which the true church was based. What we are much more concerned with here is the attitude of the *Lutheran* church since the Reformation to the doctrine of episcopal succession.

I

The view that the ministry in the contemporary church was a continuation of the Apostolic ministry and that the holders of the office of the ministry were successors of the Apostles was of special significance both for Luther and for the confessions. "Christ made and began the Gospel", writes Luther, "and therefore he first imprinted it on the hearts of the Apostles and afterwards for ever and ever through the successors of the Apostles imprinted it on the hearts of those who believe in Christ."

When further the confessions speak of the ministry as being of divine origin, they too do so by referring to the Apostles. The authority of the ministry in

the church is contained in the words of Christ to the Apostles: "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (John 17:18), "He that heareth you heareth me" (Luke 10:16). What is said here to the Apostles applies then to their successors at all times.

This interpretation of the clergy as the successors of the Apostles is expressed also again and again in the church orders. "Our Lord Jesus Christ, sent by his heavenly Father, called his Apostles to the office of preaching and has appointed the clergy in the church as successors of the Apostles" reads the Church Order of Cleves of 1533. The same thing is attested by the Bremen Church Order of 1534. "Jesus Christ gave to the Apostles the office of spreading abroad the Gospel, and thereafter they passed on the same ministry to other men whom we call *seniores, episcopi, pastores*."

Luther emphasizes that this office, handed down from the Apostles, is possessed by everyone in his church. He expressly acknowledges a *conservatio ministerii*, a preservation of the ministry, even during the centuries of the Papacy. Christ has ever maintained the same office which he once gave to the Apostles. He continued to do this by his marvelous power precisely under the Papacy, in spite of opposition.

The Reformation view in other words places a quite particular value on the idea of succession. Christ instituted the office of the ministry, and thereafter he has constantly maintained it, in that he has sent in our days successors of the Apostles.

But what is the real basis of the idea of succession for the Reformers? This basis is the Word. The Word is the really constant support of the church. The Word is able to do justice to its task of being the support of the church to the degree that it characterizes and stamps the office of the ministry. Apart from the Word or deviating from it, however, the ministry would not be a pillar of the church, but a threat. For this reason the Augsburg Confession names only two marks of the true church, namely Word and sacrament.

For the same reason the Lutheran theologians at the end of the century too refused to follow Melancthon when he wanted to elevate the ministry, or more correctly, obedience to the ministry, to the position of a third mark of the true church.

If the ministry, appealing to the *successio apostolica*, should lay claim to being the support of the church, while at the same time abandoning the Word, succession must give way to the Word. The church must then hold to the Word and not to succession in the office of the ministry. That was in fact the situation in which Luther found himself when he had to repudiate an idea of the succession which was alien to the Gospel, namely the Roman view of the *successio episcoporum* [succession of bishops].

Luther knew as well as the other Reformers how closely bound up the *successio apostolica* was with the Roman office of bishop and Roman views in

general. They were all aware that according to the Roman Catholic view the succession can only be an episcopal succession, which is tied to the ever continuing and uninterrupted consecration of one bishop by another. This episcopal succession guarantees the continuance of the church. Thus the church is bound to the true episcopal office, that is, to the bishops who can trace their consecration in an unbroken chain of consecrations back to the Apostles. The Reformers knew that the existence of such an episcopal office was as necessary as it was self-evident for the Catholic theologians. "The true and serious papists", reads a pronouncement of the Wittenberg theologians in 1541 in connection with the endeavors for union in Regensburg, "hold that the church is bound up with the office of bishop as with a divine ordinance, and that without this office there is no sacrament, no forgiveness of sins, no church."

It is impossible to give clearer expression than this to one's appreciation of the significance of the doctrine of the *successio episcoporum* for the Catholic point of view. And yet the Reformers were not prepared to take it over, although they desired the reunification of the church, for which they were working just as much as the Catholic theologians in this case. Otherwise they would have had to admit that the Roman bishops, in spite of their deviation from the faith of the Apostles, were nevertheless their successors. They would have acknowledged them as successors of the Apostles in the Word and as true bishops, but since they had deviated from the Word, they no longer occupied the chair of the Apostles. Luther writes in 1523: "If our bishops really occupied the place of the Apostles, then it would be quite in order for them to do what they boast of, what Titus, Timothy, Paul and Barnabas did at the installation of clergy. But they no longer occupy this place. They have deviated from it; it can no longer be said that they occupy the chair of the Apostles. If they have deviated from the doctrine of the Apostles, there is no sense in their regarding themselves as the only ones authorized to consecrate and in holding that consecration is valid only if it is practised by them".

But what is true of Luther's attitude to the episcopacy is true also of his attitude to episcopal succession in general. Here too Luther emphasizes that division may be allowed to come about only "if it is necessary". It is necessity which forces it into being. If this necessity had not arisen, through the refusal of the Catholic bishops to consecrate evangelically-minded pastors, there would have been no reason for the Reformation to break with episcopal succession as an ecclesiastical arrangement. At the same time, however, the basic theological interpretation has always remained clear. Even though Luther did not go into a thorough treatment of the doctrine of the *successio apostolica*, Melancthon on the other hand took it up again very energetically. "To what is the church bound?" is one of the questions in his *Loci Communes*. The answer: "to the voice or the office of the Gospel". God acts through the *vox evangelii* [voice of the Gospel]. Through it he builds his church. Is the church bound to the bishops? Is it bound to the regular *successio episcoporum*? Melancthon declares once

again that the church is bound to the office of the ministry as being the preacher of the Gospel. From time to time God raises up men who teach this Gospel aright, even though at the same time some might spread abroad more light than others. According to this rule it must be seen that the church is not bound to particular offices or to the *successio ordinaria episcoporum*. For when those who possess this *successio ordinaria* err, they ought not to be heard.

If we now turn to the theologians after Luther and Melancthon, we find in them a terminological distinction which is not found in the earlier Reformers, namely the distinction between the *successio doctrinae* or *doctrinalis*, [succession in doctrine] and the *successio personalis ac localis*, [succession in person and place] succession in the line and the chair of the bishops. This distinction is characteristic for all later Lutheran theologians. They all emphasize in common that the most important characteristic in the idea of succession is the succession in doctrine, while the succession in the line and on the chair of the bishops is subordinate to this and therefore of secondary value. In this they always appeal to the church fathers. What is the attitude of the Catholics to the question of pure doctrine, which nevertheless according to church tradition is indissolubly bound to the *successio episcoporum*? asked Jakob Heerbrand, who was the first to make this distinction. They have made out of the succession a *successio "nuda ac sola"*, a bare and isolated succession, which in itself is supposed to serve as a characteristic and distinguishing mark of the church, even when this succession no longer has anything at all to do with the passing on of pure doctrine. But mere succession to a chair can never guarantee the existence of the church. If the institutional office of the ministry deviates in its doctrine from the succession of the Apostles, the church must be destroyed, or God must save it by sending it teachers who without regard for the *successio ordinaria* will lead the church back to purity.

But Heerbrand, in spite of his distinction between *successio loci* and *successio doctrinalis* and his criticism of the former, does not want to give up the *successio loci*. Certain of Luther's ideas are here extended. Lutheran theology, he emphasizes, only wanted to do away with abuse. A rightly understood succession on the chair, says Heerbrand in effect, would be a continual reminder of the fact that the church has her doctrine not from men but from God. Those who stand in the succession are witnesses to the fact that the prophetic and Apostolic writings came from the hands of those who were eye-witnesses of the things which they recount and which were afterwards proclaimed and passed on *per manus a prioribus ad posteros*, by hand from those that have gone before to those that follow.

II

The Lutheran churches on the continent were compelled to make the break with the tradition of the episcopate by the fact that the Catholic bishops refused to acknowledge the Gospel and to ordain pastors for the evangelical

congregations. The split came about in the individual territorial churches everywhere at about the same time. The episcopal office handed down from the Middle Ages was preserved longest—until about 1550—in the bishoprics along the Baltic coast. In contrast to the German churches, Denmark and Norway retained the particular office of bishop with a particular episcopal consecration which differed from the normal ordination of a priest. But the first evangelical bishops in Denmark were consecrated not by a previously consecrated bishop standing in the line of the historic episcopal succession, but by the Reformer of North Germany, Johannes Bugenhagen. He was, it is true, recognized by Luther and others as a bishop and was so called, but according to the stipulations of canon law he was ordained only as a presbyter. Therefore the churches for whom the episcopal succession is a necessary mark of the true church refuse to acknowledge the Danish and Norwegian episcopate.

The only Lutheran church which was able to continue the old episcopate in historic succession was the Swedish-Finnish church. The Swedish bishops at the time of the Reformation and ever since were and have been consecrated by bishops who themselves stood in episcopal succession. Thus they took over and passed on to their successors the succession to both person and chair, which is the main point for the traditional theology of succession. This chain has never been interrupted in the present Swedish church. The reason why this succession was held fast was the fact that the Catholic world around and the Counter-Reformation had to acknowledge the Swedish evangelical bishops as rightly consecrated bishops, even though this consecration took place under violent circumstances. These bishops were schismatic. They had broken with the Pope, but their consecration was not on that account invalid. They could be deprived neither of the validity of their consecration nor of the exercise of their episcopal office. It was only when the first Swedish Church Order of 1571 was introduced, with services and formulations of consecration corresponding to Lutheran understanding, that the Catholics refused to recognize as still bishops those consecrated according to this order.

But there is a great difference between a church which exercises and acknowledges the episcopal succession and one for whom the succession represents an imperative requirement for the true church. The consciousness of possessing episcopal succession has never led the church in Sweden to demand of other churches the same structure of the ministry nor, in the lack or even on account of the lack of such a succession, to regard the ministry in these churches as inferior or as not existing at all. The maintenance of episcopal succession and the unbroken continuity of episcopal consecration have been cherished by the Swedish church as a part of its own order of the ministry. Uninterrupted episcopal succession was something which it endorsed because it endorsed the episcopate. To depart from the succession would be for the Swedish church of today a break which it would like to avoid. On the other hand, however, episcopal succession belongs, to use the language of Lutheran

ecclesiastical law, to the *jus humanum*, to the "human law", that is in practice, to the Swedish church order. It does not exist *jure divino*, that is, by virtue of a divine law, which would make it necessary to advocate such a succession as a requirement in regard to other churches and their ministries. Succession is not a *nota*, a mark of the true church, any more than any other form of the ministry or of church order might be. The only such *notae* are the pure preaching of the Gospel and the right administration of the sacraments, as article VII of the Augsburg Confession expressly affirms.

An example will make clear how the line of episcopal succession is to be seen through Lutheran eyes. One of the Swedish-Finnish bishops at the time of the Reformation, Paul Juusten, was the author of a chronicle of the Finnish episcopacy, the *Chronicon Episcoporum Finlandensium*. Juusten was a convinced adherent of the Reformation, but that did not prevent him from seeing his own office as bishop in Åbo [Turku] as a link in the whole chain of bishops. He knew that he stood in the line of bishops of the Finnish church which began with the first missionary bishops. In this *ordinaria successio* there was no break. Juusten well knew that since the beginning of this chain vast changes had taken place in the church, but even the Reformation did not interrupt the *successio ordinaria*. It founded no new church and therefore no new episcopate either. On the episcopal chair one bishop still followed another as before. But from here to the acceptance of the theology of succession which forms the basis of the Roman idea of the church is a big step, and Juusten resolutely refused to acknowledge that the continual and uninterrupted succession on the episcopal chair guaranteed, precisely through its continuity, the legitimacy of the ministry, the validity of the sacraments in the hands of this ministry and the existence of the true church. Like the other bishops of his homeland, in defending his ministry he never appealed to the succession, but always and only to the fact that he possessed and preached the true Gospel and was legitimately called by the church to whom the Gospel and the ministry of preaching are entrusted. In just the same way Archbishop Laurentius Petri declared, "The public servant of the church has his legitimate right to his office not in that he has taken it over from this person or that with the laying on of hands, but in that he is called to this office either directly by God or indirectly by the church."

III

In this survey I have particularly emphasized Swedish Reformation theology. It was natural for it to concern itself in a special way with the office of bishop, and in this can be noticed again and again the dual attitude toward succession. This attitude is on the one hand positive. Its intention is to strengthen the joy and the authority of the minister in his work through the fact that he knows himself to be in a succession and to strengthen in the people

respect for his office. But there is also a negative side. Succession cannot guarantee the existence of the true church. Only the Word can do that. If in conclusion we compare the evangelical idea of the succession, as we find it for example in the Swedish church, with the Roman idea, there is revealed much in which they agree, as well as much in which they differ. The agreement lies in the fact that both give an answer to the same question, namely to the question of the *conservatio ministerii*, of the continuance and preservation of the ministry. The office of the ministry which now exists in the church is no new creation, no human arrangement, but it goes back in a straight line through the ages to the biblical office of the ministry and to the institution of the ministry by God. It is from this divine institution that the office of the ministry derives its authority. Every servant of the church may be sure that he stands in succession to the Apostles and that he serves in the same ministry as they. Therefore the idea of succession forms one of the bases for the joy of the minister in his office.

But here in both views the differences begin. The evangelical idea of the succession is connected with the whole ministry of preaching, not just with a certain category within it, namely the episcopate. The succession is not bound to the position of the bishops, who are bearers of the succession in the Roman doctrine. That is not by any means to say that now the *successio episcoporum* is replaced by a *successio presbyterorum*. This would only bring in a new succession of consecration, in which the consecrating power of the bishops would have passed to the presbyters. The evangelical idea of the succession does not mean that the presbyters take over the role of the bishops and so become the bearers of the succession, but it means that the ministry of preaching is preserved, an office in which both *episcopi* and *presbyteri* participate.

The preservation of the ministry always comes about through God's continual intervention. That is another basic theme in the Lutheran conception of succession. Even if the succession takes place in a straight line, it must nevertheless be constantly upheld by God's intervention and fresh creation. God has assigned the transmission of the ministry neither to the office of presbyter nor to the office of bishop. That is his own activity. God himself is always intervening. That happens in the peaceful eras of the church too when ministers are not called directly by God and when such a call is not to be expected. The institution of the ministry and its continual preservation through the indirect call of the church does not imply in contrast to this any basic limitation, for even the indirect call is a call by God. God himself calls his minister through the church. On the other hand, however—and this is decisive—for the evangelical church, in contrast to the Roman idea of succession, an interruption of the lawful, legitimate line of the ministry does not imply a catastrophe. It would be so for the Roman idea of succession, in which

everything depends upon the unbroken continuation of the chain of consecrating hands which transmits power from Christ and the Apostles on downward. The grace of God goes through these hands as through a channel. If this channel is once broken, everything is over. In opposition to this, evangelical theology says: When in the regular line of the ministry there occurs at some time an interruption because the servants fall away from the Gospel or because external force intervenes in it, God preserves the ministry of preaching through men called directly by him—it was thus with the prophets in the Old Testament, it was thus in the history of the church, above all in the case of Luther himself.

But God's direct intervention occurs only in those times when the ministry is not in order. When the church is living at peace, he lets the call to the ministry occur indirectly through the church. Through the call of the church the continuous succession in the ministry is upheld. That means that the preservation of the ministry, the *conservatio ministerii*, occurs through the whole church and not through the ministry itself or through a certain rank within the ministry. It occurs in principle through the call of the church and in practice through the consecration of the bishops. The church can assign the exercise of the call to the bishops, and they can exercise the call through consecration. But the church can also revoke this authorization if the bishops abuse it. Even if the transmission of the ministry occurs in practice through the consecration of the bishops, the church retains this right and does not renounce it. Even the episcopal ministry belongs to the church, not the church to the ministry.

The Significance of the Problem of Language for the Church of Today

A contribution to the theme "The Unity of the Church in Freedom"

The problem of language has received remarkably little attention in theology and the church, although it has always been of great theological and practical significance for the life of the church. As a problem it is not easy to formulate briefly since it manifests itself in very diverse ways in very diverse places. Here we shall choose four areas in which the problem of language is posed for the church to solve and in which its urgency can be seen.

1. When Christians come together, as in the ecumenical movement or the Lutheran World Federation, the diversity of languages proves to be a hindrance in the way of unity. Thus the fragmentation caused by linguistic differences among Lutherans in many places, as for example in South America, makes it difficult for them to establish strong congregations which are the realization of true fellowship. What is true on a small scale is also true for Christianity as a whole.

2. Moreover, one of the most urgent problems of the church is that of speaking through Christian preaching to the man of today in the language which he understands. The fact that the world has changed has contributed in many ways to the fact that the church and the man in the street speak two different languages and therefore just do not meet.

3. In large areas of the world, particularly in America and Asia at the present time, a change in language is taking place among large groups of the population, generally leading toward a unified national language. The church which in many cases was the trustee for long periods of time of the particular linguistic and cultural heritage of these groups is called both to take a position and to take action.

4. Finally, we shall refer briefly to the old problem of all missionary work, that the Gospel is called to transcend the boundaries of the nations and of their languages and to penetrate into new areas of language; it must, however, really penetrate thoroughly if it is to be effective.

In all these questions which indeed are far from peripheral to church life or theology the problem of language is involved.

I

The scant attention which the problem of language has received in the church may be connected with the fact that in many circles a conception of language which has its origin in the Enlightenment is still unconsciously maintained. Admittedly people no longer regard language, as they did at that time, as the product of human agreement, but it is regarded as a purely technical means of making oneself understood whose essential constituents are phonology, grammar and vocabulary. In that case language would be an instrument of which man makes use, which is at his disposal and which, if it proves itself unsuitable, can be exchanged for a better. This common conception leaves out of consideration all that we have learned and understood since Hamann and Herder about the nature of language. Neither does it correspond to the biblical conception of language, which in Genesis 10 and 11 traces the nations and languages back to God's creating and judging action. The merely instrumental conception of language prevents us from recognizing the significance of the problem of language and from working relevantly at its solution. Therefore we must to start with point up a few—admittedly provisional—aspects of the nature and significance of language.

In contrast to the conception of language as a mere instrument of man, it must be understood as the essential expression of man's being a person. We shall confine ourselves to a few fundamental thesis-like observations, by referring both to the personal conception of man which has found its place in Protestant theology and to the philosophy of language which we come upon in, for example, such an unusual thinker as Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy. Language belongs to man's being in a twofold way. For man is man by being the one who is addressed, who is able to reply to the word which encounters him. "The word is the basic constituent factor of human existence." "Being a person is that being which I receive in hearing the word in which another communicates himself to me." "But the word in which the personal relationship between men takes place and the word in which God speaks to us are alike."¹ Thus being a person is grounded in the word and therefore in language.

But then there follows what Rosenstock-Huessy especially brings out. The history of mankind, which can be summed up under the pronoun "we" as something experienced and acknowledged in common, is always the outcome of hearing and speaking.² Man as an historical being is a social being, and this fellowship is possible only through language and is realized in it. "The nature of language is disclosed where the incomparably higher significance of the living "Thou" as opposed to all designation as merely "It" is recognized. And this occurs ultimately only where God's thee-I-it movement which has been restored by revelation is acknowledged by us in all that we are."³

1 F. Gogarten, quoted by G. Cloege in *Kerygma und Dogma*, 1955, No. 1, p. 31.

2 Rosenstock-Huessy, according to Georg Müller in *Kerygma und Dogma*, 1956, No. 2, p. 148.

3 *ibid.* in *Evangelische Theologie*, 1954, p. 317.

For our context it is important that this "logality" ["Wortlichkeit"—state of being dependent on words] (Gogarten) of man is always realized in a quite definite particular language. There is no word which can reach a man and be answered by him which is not part of a concrete language which has grown up in and is limited by history. The "logality" of man is therefore not something above or beyond languages which only then seeks out a language for itself, but it is enclosed from the outset in a body of language. Certainly one can at the same time trans-late from one language into another, but one can never, so to speak, transcend concrete historical language. If this is abandoned, words, understanding and man's being a person cease.

But by means of a concrete particular language man is placed in a supra-individual historical-cultural context which determines him in his whole being. The words he chooses, like the grammatical constructions, are already given. His whole thought proceeds along paths prepared well in advance and is influenced by the preconceptions thus given. All this is intended to show us one thing: language is concerned with man's being a person and with his finding his proper place in his environment. Anyone who wants to understand man must understand his language, in fact examine it and apprehend him in it.

No less is the significance of language for the church as the body of the proclamation of the Gospel. Let us clearly understand that God's revelation aims directly at man's language. That is the anthropological point which God has chosen for his self-revelation: God reveals himself in word. He did it through the prophets in the Old Testament, he did it in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, and he speaks through the word of proclamation. Thus the revelation of God in the Old Testament makes use not only of the Israelite prophets, but of their language, and his revelation finds expression in this near eastern Semitic language. The proclamation of the Gospel too always makes use of the various human languages. Speaking with tongues, which has the appearance of a spiritual super-language, is permitted only when it is translated into a concrete human language (I Cor. 14: 28). In Christ, the Word of God in the flesh, it becomes apparent that God gives himself when he addresses himself to men. For him too, his speech is not just an instrument, but it affects his innermost nature: in his Word he offers himself.

Faith also has a verbal character, for it is man's answer to God's Word. In faith man's being as a person which was formerly disordered is realized, in that faith is response and that in faith man stands before God and in life as a responsible person. When faith responds to God with praise and thanks, this leads to confession of faith. In this common act of confessing we are confronted by the fact of the church.

All this then is realized in the body of specific human languages, even though we are well aware that the call of God which confronts us in the Gospel, reaching us in a particular language, is the *one* call of God, which is valid for all men in all languages. It is therefore not bound to a particular language. Here we are

faced with a significant polarity: man hears the message in a particular language and responds to it in faith by means of his limited language. But he knows that the Word of God does not limit itself to his language, but that it remains free in relation to it and penetrates into all languages, because it is valid for all men in all languages. Thus the significance of the problem of language for the church becomes apparent. Man is reached only in that existence of his formed by language, and the Word of the Gospel becomes audible only when it is preached in that polarity by penetrating into the immediacy of a particular language, and yet it does so as the *one* Word of God for *all* men of *all* languages, binding them all together in Christ.

II

Starting from this basis, we shall attempt, by giving just a few indications, to touch upon the focal points in which the church has to make decisions in questions of language today.

1. What attitude should be adopted by the church in struggling for her unity to the fact that Christendom is divided up into many language groups? Should she let herself be determined by the point of view of unity and therefore further a unification of language, or should she give preference to the immediacy of penetration into the realms of particular languages, at the risk of further division?

Church history reveals two extreme solutions which are a warning against a one-sided solution. The Roman Catholic church has for centuries made the point of view of unity predominate. Therefore she has decided in favor of using for worship a single language which is dead and no longer spoken by the congregation. The service is held everywhere among all nations in all regions, regardless of the language spoken there, and at all times, in the same Latin language form, even if this is no longer understood by the congregation. The quietly mumbled words of institution of the Lord's Supper and the prayers in the Mass are not the personally comforting words of God and the cry of response of men, but an ultimately impersonal ritual, whose effect is decided according to its officially regulated course as an *opus operatum*. The piety of the congregation therefore sought its own expression outside that which happens in the liturgy. Thus was achieved the imposing unity of the church as presented in the single sacred language of worship. We only mention that this can be said today only in part, since wide circles of Catholics who have been gripped by the liturgical movement are asserting the right to their own language in worship.

As the opposite pole to this there stands what we call the national church. National churches began to be formed even in ancient times, particularly in the east. But national church tendencies developed later in Lutheranism too. Here the boundary of the national language and fellowship is made the boundary of the church. Church and nation, faith and language are so intermingled that both seem to become a unity. That no doubt always happens

to the disadvantage of faith. For now faith and church are misinterpreted as factors in national existence and are robbed of their eschatological and eternal character. They become the servants of national interests. The consciousness of the unity of the church throughout the world is lost.

Between the two extremes there is a wide area in which the church may in freedom seek the right solutions. Guidance toward the solution is given by the Pauline picture of the church as the body of Christ, which is to be applied to the church as a whole—that is, the *una sancta*. In I Cor. 12 Paul develops the dual idea that the body of Christ is characterized by a great diversity of members and that the members have very diverse functions. This diversity is to be endorsed. Paul opposes the idea of establishing uniformity. Anyone who strives for uniformity misunderstands the nature of the body and destroys it. The congregation must learn to recognize and gratefully to endorse unity in variety and diversity. But it is precisely in this point that every member should know himself to be responsible for the whole body and for all the other members and should accordingly serve the others. He must in fact really understand himself as a member of the body which has life and meaning only in its membership. The endorsement of the diversity entails endorsing fellowship and unity in Christ and responsible service to the whole.

We may relevantly apply this argument to the organization of the church by language. This is nowhere abolished in the New Testament. The representatives of different peoples and languages who hear and understand the sermon at Pentecost nevertheless because of that continue to belong to their own peoples and languages. And even of the host of the departed who stand before the throne of God it is said that they come from all peoples and tongues (Rev. 7: 9). The division by language is not merely a consequence of sin, as represented in the story of the tower of Babel (Gen. 11), but even before this the list of the nations is recorded without this division being traced back to human sin (Gen. 10). Thus in connection with baptism the Christian is made conscious of the relativity of his membership in a people in comparison to his relation to God and to the church (Gal. 3: 28). But this belonging to a people and a language is not abolished any more than is the existence of the sexes, which continues and brings with it certain obligations for the Christian too. But in this existence of differences the Christian recognizes unity in Christ. Thus the heavenly rejoicing resounds with one accord to God, and is especially glorious in its diversity (Rev. 7: 9). Even the church as it strives for unity may joyfully acknowledge the multiplicity of languages and may enter into each. But language may never become the limit of proclamation and of church fellowship or the limit of common confession, even if proclamation in his own language touches man most profoundly and immediately. The church is one and belongs fundamentally to all languages, for Christ is Lord of all Christians and all the world.

2. No less relevant for today is the problem of language in the church's preaching in regard to the man of today. This problem is distinguished from the one we have just mentioned in that it is not the difference of national languages but the difference of language which is felt. It is a question of the contrast between the traditional language of the church's preaching and the language spoken and understood by the man who himself is changing in a world which today has been transformed by rationalization and industrialization. We are accustomed to speak of the problem of hermeneutics. It would lead us too far if we were to treat it in detail here. We shall just give some indications, because in our context they can mediate some important aspects.

The problem of language is so complicated because language is a living organism which is continually developing and which one can grasp only when one is in living contact with it. But the change in language does not take place in accordance with autonomous linguistic laws in an area ruled by the philologists, but is the result of a change in man himself. Language in fact is not independent, but the expression of man's being.

Thus today we are observing an enrichment of language with specialized technical expressions, while the concepts used by the church (sin, grace, faith, love, hope), which for earlier generations were rich in content, seem to be falling into decay, like the stones of the splendid buildings of Venice. The decay in German affects particularly the nouns, while the verbs are affected to a lesser extent. That is understandable, since the nouns assume an independence apart from the person who is speaking and represent as it were an impersonal system, whereas the verbs always draw the person in as well. Here we are asking only whether the church in her preaching must adopt man's use of technical concepts and the decadence of his language in order to approach man, or whether she has a responsibility for language which prohibits her from renouncing these concepts of hers because they express specific facts which cannot be given up, because in losing these concepts language would necessarily experience a catastrophic impoverishment. Can she express these facts in another way by coining new phrases?

Regarding a solution, one can say only this much at present, that it is not to be reached by way of a technical operation. Every attempt to create a consciously relevant language of preaching has always failed in that it expanded the language by means of a series of modern concepts which were very contrived and therefore had an unnatural and disagreeable effect, and which were felt to be obviously affected. Given the nature of language as we have considered it above, this is understandable. Language cannot in itself be renovated. It can only be renewed in the context of man's being as a person, which we have seen to be a responsible historical existence in fellowship. It will be relevant when the speaker himself is involved in the matter, that is when as a man who is informed about the problems of our times

he is concerned to fulfill his faith in obedience. This truthfulness and frankness in his relationship to God and to the world today is the necessary basis and source of his new language. But this will not be felt as a new language. Rather the speaker will forget his language in his concern for his subject. And that is pertinent if language is a dimension of our human existence and not an independent instrument. Thus the artificiality of our language in preaching always points to a very serious defect in the preacher and in the church itself, if it is a matter of a general phenomenon.

3. The problem of language is urgent in all countries in which large groups of the congregation are changing from one language to another and in which the church is compelled to define its attitude and to take organizational measures. Such a situation exists today for the Lutheran church in both North and South America. It is produced in every place where former colonial areas, to which people from the most diverse nations emigrated and where they have long preserved their linguistic-cultural independence, are now becoming unified states, each aware of itself as a national entity with a common national language. A similar movement is taking place, though as yet but slowly, in those states in Asia and Africa which have only just become independent and which are composed of many tribes with different languages. In North America, as is well known, this development was set in motion with irresistible impetus after the first world war and in South America about the middle of the 'thirties, and has taken a hold on all those ethnic groups which previously boasted of their cultural independence. Any attempt to put an end to this development would be doomed to failure. But such an attempt would seem to be thoroughly out of place, since the impulse towards a common language can open up great possibilities for the church. The church which was previously split up by language barriers can now transcend these barriers and unite as a single body, in fact she can now push forward with missionary work in the nation which speaks the same language. In North America the language change has introduced a new epoch for Lutheranism, and one is tempted to expect the same in other regions in which a unified nation is being formed.

But here it is necessary to give a word of warning and call to mind the profound nature of language with all its consequences for men and groups, and at the same time point out that the situation is different in areas with a different history, of a different religious and confessional composition and different ethnic-sociological structure. The positive development which Lutheranism has followed in the USA since the language change is not to be attributed solely to this change. One must bear in mind that in America there exist two determining factors which are not present for instance in South America. The United States with its English language is a society with a long Protestant history and corresponding culture, which is moreover suited to the people who have emigrated there mostly from central and northern European countries. Thus the forms of family life are familiar to the Lutherans who

originally spoke a different language, and they find a language there in the formation of which the evangelical faith has already played a part. In addition there is the fact that the process of the language change was already under way two hundred years ago. The United Lutheran Church as the largest Lutheran church body was already "Americanized" to a high degree and could thus serve as a bridge. Here there is no abrupt transition to be made. It is quite otherwise in South America, where a minority of Lutherans is confronted with an overwhelming majority of Spanish- or Portuguese-speaking people and a society which is nationally and sociologically alien and for the most part racially mixed. This society is unequivocally stamped with a pre-Reformation Catholicism to which evangelical thought is an utterly foreign conception and which, even though it has long since become secularized, leaves practically no room for an evangelical way of life. As a result of this, the transition to the new language is much more abrupt.

What happens in such a case? Not only is an out-of-date instrument replaced by one which is more up-to-date, but a far-reaching process takes place in the course of the language change. The historical being of this man or group is radically transformed. We assume in this that it is not just a question of the transition to bilingualism, which in fact to begin with represents an enrichment, but of the switch over from the mother tongue to the national language as the medium of daily living. In this case the man who was sustained until recently by the language and culture of the nation of his origin and carried within him the heritage of this nation stands at first completely naked as an individual without a history. The society into which he has to integrate himself is clearly constructed and a well-defined whole. There is nothing left for him but to fit himself into this spiritually, intellectually and sociologically alien environment. Even when it is a group and not an individual which accomplishes the change-over, there will probably be—admittedly in a smaller measure—some structural change. It may even be said that the nations in which a language change is taking place on a broad front show a tendency at first to use the language more on the technical side. Therefore organizational and technical problems come to the fore here, whereas the spiritual and intellectual problems which were thought through and striven over in the old cultures, whether they be philosophical or theological in nature, do not provoke the same interest and therefore recede into the background.

A direct result of the change in language of a man or a small group is that frequently their powers of intellect are strained by the process of adjustment and in consequence their own creative intellectual power and initiative suffer certain constraints. There is even the danger of their developing inferiority complexes in face of the closely-knit nature and the newness of the strange world which comes upon them. Then these are often compensated for not by intellectual achievement but by material display, or by an exaggerated

nationalism which disowns these people's own past. That need by no means necessarily be so, but must be seen as a danger when there occurs a sudden unorganized transition which leads to intellectual and spiritual uprooting.

What should be the relation of the church to all this? She neither can nor will hinder nor encourage such a language transition. As a church she has her task in both languages and areas of life. But she will have to make herself fully aware of the special conditions of such a transition and the possibilities and dangers inherent in it. She is called to serve her members particularly in these dangers. In so doing she will have to decide on far-sighted strategy and be prepared to correct traditional ways and enter upon entirely new paths.

Because the language change involves the danger of spiritual, intellectual and cultural isolation and uprooting, the church will have to be conscious in this situation of a responsibility for the cultural, social and sociological areas of life which is much more far-reaching than it would be in linguistically stable circumstances. The sensitive point is schools and education. The church shares the responsibility for a school which can be the "midwife" at the birth of the new linguistic cultural existence, in that it links the old environment from which the individual and the group come with the new one and gives the lead in working out the consequences of this.

In addition the church must concern herself with the new interpretation of the Gospel, the confession and theology in the new language world. Precisely at this point it is evident that literal translation is not sufficient, but that a spiritual and intellectual elaboration and clarification are necessary in order to render up-to-date and indigenous the theology which has grown up under other spiritual and intellectual conditions.

Finally, a small group which is caught in the process of language transition needs strong ecumenical contacts. It has weakened its close connection with people of its native country and its linguistic and cultural world. Thus it stands very much alone in relation to the vast alien environment which threatens to engulf it. Ecumenical contact, and especially contact with one's own supranational church, gives the consciousness of standing, even at a period of language transition, within the great and wide, even though diverse, fellowship of the church.

4. As the final point in the problem of language we shall just mention the missionary impulse to reach across a language barrier to a pagan people. Much has been thought and written about this to which we could refer. At this point we should like to point up but one example. If in India today direct missionary proclamation to the Indian people is confined to indigenous missionaries, this measure, motivated by political interests, has from the point of view of linguistic directness a certain advantage. Naturally the Indian can speak to the Indian in a way quite different from that in

which the foreigner can. And yet such a regulation, if it becomes law, involves the danger of the development of a national church and the loss of the awareness of the supranational, supralingual unity of the church. It is precisely in the mission that the polarity of the work of the church which acquiesces in the particularity of language and yet emphasizes the *one* Word of God for the whole world must be expressed.

It was the intention of this exposition to draw attention to the problem of language which receives little notice in the church. For me it became important only as I travelled through North and especially South America. In the linguistically self-contained church areas of Europe it is scarcely felt. I believe that it is in the question of language that the problem of the unity and freedom of the church in Christ becomes acute and demands solution.

FROM THE WORK OF THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION AND THE ECUMENICAL WORLD

GENEVA DIARY

A new project has recently been launched by the Department of World Service in its Exchange of Church Workers program. The purpose of this work is to help younger pastors and laymen to visit other churches and countries to observe and study the life of the congregations and other special interests. Out of our experiences in these last few years there has come a strong conviction that individuals working in their churches should have the possibility of learning by personal contact what other churches may be doing. For several decades now churches, secular agencies and governments have launched rather extensive programs which will permit students and individuals engaged in specialized work to study and observe in other countries. In our own Federation we have such scholarships for theological students and professors through the Department of Theology. In the Department of World Mission opportunity has been given to students and pastors from churches in Asia to study in their chosen fields.

This particular program now being launched by World Service has a somewhat different emphasis. The intent of this project is to engage as many people as possible who are at the moment involved in the practical life of the church, to observe and study. It is not primarily academic and scholastic. For example, we are encouraging the churches to select such individuals who are concerned with youth work, student work, Inner Missions, etc. It is the strong feeling of many who have been working in the various programs of the L.W.F. that only in this way can we build permanent understanding among our churches. Furthermore, such an exchange of experiences and contacts will help to bring new ideas and methods into the life of our congregations. We face many formidable problems in launching such a program. Among the minority churches, for instance, we are told that such younger pastors and leaders cannot be spared from their work for a period of three months or more in order to engage in this study. Another problem we face is the selection of the best suited individuals. We realize also that in many instances information concerning this program will not reach all of our pastors and congregations so that they are aware that such opportunities are available. We believe, however, that in spite of these problems a healthy interchange will mean a great deal to the life of our churches. We encourage pastors and lay workers to contact their national committees with reference to this important matter.

In a few weeks the annual meeting of the Commission on World Mission will be held in Hurdalsverk, Norway. From all indications this will be the best attended of the eight meetings held to date. One happy situation is that there will be more representatives from Asia and Africa than at any previous meeting. One of the reasons for the importance of this annual meeting is that the Commission will be analyzing and studying the results of the two continental conferences in Africa and Asia held during the last twelve months. The Commission will need to carry forward the main objectives of these two church meetings. It is not enough to hold such meetings as were held in Africa and Asia; even more important is the necessity of a quick follow-up and a proper carrying out of the various results. As the favorable echoes from both of these meetings continue to show the value of our approach, our Commission will need to take decisive action at a number of strategic points. For the first time the Commission itself will be balanced by having three representatives of the six representing Asia and Africa. We welcome this forward step.

World Mission as it meets in Norway will also be confronted with a number of timely questions which we need to face in common. The question of the relation of mission and emerging church, the place of the missionary, the growth of autonomy and the training of leaders are only a few items that will be discussed at this meeting. The Commission also will use the opportunity to review its eight-year history for the purpose of beginning to lay plans for the next five-year period following the next Assembly. No one at the first meeting of this Commission in 1949 in Oxford dreamed of the vast potentials of the work of such a Commission. We now need to analyze the results and to plot the direction in which we move.

The resignation and departure of Mr. Reuben Baetz as Director of Lutheran World Service prompts me to comment upon the use of lay leadership in our L.W.F. It has been a fortunate fact for us that a number of good laymen have offered their services to the church in these years. Mr. Baetz, for example, interrupted his graduate studies in history to volunteer for work in our Service to Refugees program in Germany in 1949. Since that time he has served continuously in various capacities and during the last few years at headquarters here in Geneva. The fact of his being a layman has been of unusual value, particularly in an approach to the international agencies both here in Geneva and in other places. We think also of other examples of laymen who are serving the Federation — Mr. Christian Christiansen in Jordan, Mr. Wilhelm Steinhäuser in Syria, Mr. Roman Ritter in Geneva plus many others in our various programs. It has been of great importance in our work to secure the services of such competent men who have dedicated themselves to the work of the church. We trust that we can continue this policy in the future.

Carl E. Lund-Quist

World Mission

Report 1956*

The two great events in the past year are, of course, the two continental conferences: the one held in November in Tanganyika, Africa, and the other in January in Madras, India. (See LUTHERAN WORLD, Vol. II/1, p. 57 and Vol. II/4, p. 327, p. 380 ff. and p. 394 ff.) These gatherings gave us a sort of bird's-eye view of where we stand today in Asia and Africa, of how far we have gone and of how little we have accomplished.

There are, of course, a number of problems that come to the forefront after such continental conferences. Right now it is very clear that the political freedom arrived at in Asia has greatly forced the development of autonomous churches. And this political process has also, in many ways, changed the relations between the missionaries and the churches. An adjustment is taking place whereby the foreign helpers from abroad are, little by little, getting their natural and normal position in the churches in Asia. While the former tension here is easing within the churches, it appears that many of the new governments of Asia have stiffened in their resistance against foreign missionaries. This is due mainly to the fact that in country after country the state has entered upon relations with an old or new religion as a kind of partner in a new state religion. In India it is Hinduism; in Burma, and also lately in Ceylon, it is Buddhism; in China it is communism in a way that justifies us in calling Chinese communism a new religion. The future will show whether Islam in Indonesia will be strong enough after the last elections to demand a merger between Islam and the state, although President Sukarno himself, in an interview with Dr. F. C. Fry and the Director of the Department of World Mission, very explicitly stated that he would fight for the freedom of worship in the constitution of his country. Although the old religions are coming back more and more to their former position in Japan, there are still no signs of a direct link-up again between religion and state. But it is possible that this may yet come.

The situation is quite different in Africa. The movement towards political freedom

has truly started. While earlier there were only two free nations, there are now the Sudan, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and Morocco as well as the Gold Coast. A number of others will soon follow. This is the great sensation in Africa today. But the colonial atmosphere nevertheless reigns throughout the greater part of the continent and makes the African Christian timid, disappointed and bewildered since at the same time there is suppression and racial discrimination for Africans in a number of places. Where Islam has a hold on the majority of the people, we are witnessing a beginning of the same development as we have seen in Asia: a combination of state and religion both in northern Africa and in the Sudan. It is of interest to note that, while the Coptic church is the state church in Ethiopia, the majority of the population is Mohammedan.

This, in a nutshell, is where Christianity stands today. In Asia it looks as if the Christian churches must settle down as more or less accepted minority groups amidst the different Asian peoples. There are some exceptions: New Guinea, for instance, may become one of them. In Africa, the situation is still very fluid. The battle between Islam and Christianity is raging back and forth. The whole continent is still in the balance. It is not clear whether Africa will turn Islam or Christian; animism, in any case, will be the losing part. In one way communism seems to be a strange and unwanted movement for Asians and Africans. Their culture and way of life seem to be so completely in disagreement with materialistic and atheistic communism that one would think it impossible for that foreign political religion to gain a foothold in Africa and Asia. But at least it is apparent that all the nationalistic movements both in Asia and Africa have been, and will be, using communism as far as they can in order to forward their own nationalistic hopes. On the other hand, there is something in the social life of families and tribes that will dispose Africans and Asians to accept at least parts of communist doctrines.

From a Lutheran point of view, I am afraid we have to state that in general we have been too conservative and too slow in the transition from mission to church. True enough, many missionaries claim that if we are realistic, we cannot move too quickly. The nationals are not ready to

* Excerpts from the report of the Director of the Department to the Commission on World Mission meeting at Hurdal Verk, Norway, August 9-15, 1956.

take over the churches themselves. But such argumentation is really unrealistic today. The political changes in Asia have proved it and in Africa will prove it.

Very often when Lutherans have established an autonomous church, the missionaries are still in control, thus making the whole question of an independent church illusory. The ideal would, of course, be to proceed very slowly; but the ideal never happens. Christian national leaders must, in many places, be pushed into *responsible* positions. And we must run the risk that they will be failures again and again. The formation of so many, many sects in South Africa should be a warning to the whole Christian world, no matter how many reasons we can dig out to explain this movement. It is a "j'accuse" from the natives against foreign rule also in their religious life. I think that we must accept the reproach that we as Lutheran missions have not always been able to free ourselves from the daily influence of the colonial atmosphere in which the peoples have been breathing for decades. We hoped that the continental conferences would open up a new vision and speed up what has still been left undone by the Lutherans in comparison with other Protestant and Anglican church builders.

Is financial help from the West the solution?

As we look back we realize how short a way we have come in our Lutheran work in Asia and Africa—there are one million Lutherans in Africa and one and a half million in Asia—and how weak and poor many of these people still are. Western thinking is almost unanimous in saying that our money and our wealth should now help Africa and Asia to reach *our* stage of development as quickly as possible. Very often people who advocate this doctrine have the notion that it means that we must help them to reach *our* standard of living, thus taking it for granted that they all want to abandon their own way of life and accept the pattern of life that the West has instituted.

Christian missions have, from the beginning, been working through hospitals, schools and agricultural missions in changing the African and Asian way of life as well as raising their living standard. But it is not true that all Christian missions have been eager to press western civilization upon these people. In some instances that has

been done by the western colonial powers and, in other instances, this development has been brought about by the Asians and Africans themselves. Japan is a very good example of this trend. Nobody from abroad could impose any kind of western civilization upon this country. They did it themselves and they did it so splendidly that in many ways they have outdone the West. People in Madagascar and Ethiopia have in the same way shown an insatiable hunger for the civilization of the white race. But in many instances, imposing the white civilization is to destroy the way of life of an indigenous people, for example, in New Guinea and India. Consequently it may be that we have been building up so many westernized institutions in the younger churches of Africa and Asia that a crash is inevitable. There is also a danger involved in taking it for granted that what we are building up in a westernized way is the way the Christian church must live in Asia and Africa.

In other words, our money has often been a hindrance in the transition from mission to church. We have built up top-heavy missions, and once the church evolves, it is impossible to hand over these institutions because they are too costly to run. And even if the funds are available the question arises whether it is wise to build up the institutions or whether it is not better for the younger churches to seek their own national way whereby the Christian church in the country is built up as closely as possible to the normal life of the whole people. The more support a young church gets from abroad, the more difficult it is for that church to build up its own system of *stewardship*. The more we encourage the leaders of the young church to live according to western living standards, the less they will be able to really be one with their people and their church on a different living standard. It certainly takes character to give, but it takes more character to receive.

It is, of course, impossible to build up a church anywhere in Africa and Asia without financial help from the West provided it is done in the right way; for instance, as one-time investments in indispensable institutions like theological seminaries, publishing houses or a central hospital. But when the regular life of a church is subsidized by funds from abroad, then there is danger ahead; then there is very little hope of that

church becoming an evangelizing missionary church. All these factors must be kept in mind in the distribution of relief in special emergencies, such as catastrophes, famines, etc. And here, too, we must work towards the end that all such help finally means help in the direction of self-help. Financial help is not the only, the real remedy. It must have the character of temporary assistance.

Are the churches in Africa and Asia too westernized?

This is not a new question. On the contrary, it has been on the minds of missionaries for decades all over the world. It is inevitable that the missionaries from the West bring Christianity to Africa and Asia in the form in which it has been dear to them. They can not just shed their own skins but have to pass on what has become a part of their own life. The Christianity that they have taught is by necessity a more or less westernized type. On the other hand, it is obvious that peoples of Asia and Africa are not westerners and it follows that Christianity should have a different appearance on these continents. *The message will always remain the same:* Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of all the world through the atonement on the Cross, Christ the Risen Lord, coming again. But there is so much in the outward forms that need not be adopted. This struck me when I saw the life of the Lutheran church of New Guinea on a three weeks' visit. It is an isolated church, but is the least westernized I have seen so far on my travels. The liturgy and the tunes of the hymns are its own. The pattern of its spiritual life was typically New Guinean. I did not feel at home as a westerner, but I did feel at home as a Christian. A great change may take place once western civilization makes its full impact upon this country but the vision the missionaries had must be maintained.

By an easternized Christianity we do not mean a Christianity that has blended with other religions or social structures that are hostile to Christianity. Tribal customs linked up with a non-Christian religion will inevitably be an enemy to Christian life. But on the other hand a Christian church will also develop a communal life helped by ideas in social structures which are not hostile to the Christian revelation.

A young church in Asia or Africa cannot possibly leap over two thousand years of church history as if it had nothing in common with them. The whole of our church history is a valid heritage for every new church wherever it may be founded on earth and it has something to do with the actual situation everywhere. But there is also this mysterious development that when the Gospel comes to a country, it becomes a part of the life of the people there, and rightly so. Here are dangers on both sides of the road.

We need much wisdom today to walk together on the Christian path. But when you come to one country and discover three different European liturgies adhered to in one small church body, then something has been wrong from the beginning, and it may already be too late to change the situation since people are very conservative in liturgical matters. That we are on the right way from West to East in the Christian churches in Africa and Asia is shown, among other things, by Professor Arno Lehmann's outstanding book on Christian art in these churches. It will probably help many to give free way to Christian art as part of the proclamation of the Gospel in the different countries of Africa and Asia.

The best way of following up the two continental conferences would perhaps be to study more closely the transition from mission to church in all countries in Asia and Africa where there is Lutheran work and, if possible, submit it to the Commission on World Mission meeting in 1957 for detailed study.

It would be very interesting to consider for a moment the spiritual and administrative situation in such countries where we have completely independent churches in Asia and again why the development has been so slow in countries where the missions are still in charge. Can it be that the western element has not realized that it must be replaced by an eastern element if there is to be a really normal life? We must also ask some searching questions in places where autonomous churches have been formally established but where missionary rule is still imposed. Why do we need this strange bastard life? Is it a necessity or is failure its main cause? Is it linked up with spiritual factors or worldly factors such as political pressure? . . .

Fridtjov Birkeli

World Service

New Paths Face Commission on World Service

The well-beaten path which the Department of World Service has been following for so many years has now reached a major crossroads with new possibilities stretching in all directions. Guides for the new paths will be Commission on World Service members who must select which possibilities to follow during their annual meeting August 15-18, this year in London.

Perhaps the greatest change of direction would be toward the younger churches. Whereas in the past, World Service projects have been mainly confined to Europe or to emergency relief areas such as Hong Kong and the Middle East, now the Commission will be asked to approve proposed projects in Taiwan (Formosa), India and South Africa where the younger churches and diaspora groups have asked for aid. In India, mission hospitals have requested medicines and relief goods which World Service has been asked to channel through the National Christian Council of India, beginning immediately after Commission approval. Various diaspora groups of European settlers in South Africa have asked the Department to set up a spiritual ministry program for them. This would mean providing for Lutheran pastors to come from Europe and minister to the settlers who as yet have no Lutheran pastor of their own. Should this be approved, it would also be immediately implemented.

Lutheran missionaries in Taiwan asked earlier this year for World Service to set up a church-related welfare program for the medical and material relief of the nearly 80,000 Chinese refugees on the tiny overcrowded island. They also requested a full-time welfare director to supervise the work. To study the situation and determine what type of program could be set up, LWF/World Service Senior Representative in Hong Kong, the Rev. K. L. Stumpf, visited the island and prepared a long report on the needs which will be presented to the Commission. Pastor Stumpf, who will be on home leave in Europe during August, will also discuss the situation personally with Commission members during the meeting. If approved, this project would also be implemented this year.

Crossroads in England

Another decisive crossroads for World Service will be the future of its aid to Lutheran churches in England. Commission members will meet with Lutheran pastors in Great Britain in order to obtain a clear picture of the future structure and development of Lutheranism in the British Isles with particular attention being paid to the problem of increasing self support and language.

At present, there are six national Lutheran groups in England—Poles, Hungarians, Germans, Latvians, Estonians and Lithuanians. All are using their native languages in church services and all are dependent on outside help for support. The Commission will ask these congregations whether they plan to become bi-lingual or not (with English Sunday Schools for the children) and eventually, to be prepared for all-English services so that the Lutheran churches can better serve the total community instead of a gradually diminishing national group. The final goal is the creation of a Lutheran Church of Great Britain to replace the present Lutheran Council of Great Britain in which the national groups are now cooperating. Should the national groups indicate a desire to develop a bi-lingual program in the near future, the Commission will have to seriously consider the possibility of assisting them in setting up a Lutheran theological school which would be affiliated with one of the present universities in England. Such a development would also create the need for a larger church building program in England with aid from World Service.

A request from the Lutheran churches in France will present Commission members with another new path which the Department may take in the direction of providing more spiritual and less directly material aid, especially for minority Lutheran churches. The French churches wish assistance to help them translate the entire works of Luther into French.

Such a request is representative of the new needs in Europe which the Department is facing. Instead of the post-war projects of church building and repair, of food distribution and refugee housing, more and more requests are for long-range support in projects which will strengthen the churches in their day to day life and

not for just an emergency period. The World Service conference for minority Lutheran churches in Europe held in Austria last April is another example of the kind of help needed and which the Department will continue to provide.

Refugee resettlement future

The future path of an old program, that of refugee resettlement, will also be considered by the Commission. It is obvious that with the termination of the U.S. Refugee Relief Act this year, voluntary agency sponsored refugee migration from Europe is also at an end. However, migration itself will continue as it has throughout history and one thing the resettlement program has taught the Department is that there is a need for the church to serve migrants whether they be thousands or dozens and whether they be refugees or settlers during the coming years. Such services as ships' chaplains have proved their value not only in emergency periods but for decades to come.

A possibility which the Commission also will discuss in serving migrants would be to set up a program to coordinate church agencies in countries of Lutheran emigration and immigration. The emigration agencies will contact migrants as they leave, provide them with spiritual ministry and tell them something about the Lutheran church in their new land of adoption. The receiving agency will greet the migrant and see that he and his family are welcomed into the church and not left alone as has happened so often in the past. These agencies would exchange names, information and literature which would be of value for new citizens.

A new political situation in the world presents the Commission with yet another path which must be explored. Members will discuss the implications of the continuing warm weather in the Cold War and how this affects World Service projects in Eastern Europe. Could World Service continue its shipments of individual food and medicine packages into Eastern countries and would it be possible for the Department to set up Inter-Church Aid projects in Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia? are questions which the Commission will face.

Dr. Henry Schuh, American member of the Commission, will present another possibility during the meeting in his report

for the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia (UELCA). This church has requested a large grant from the Department to use in an extensive building program to meet the needs created on the continent by the influx of more than 50,000 new Lutherans during the past seven years. Most of the refugee immigrants have settled in the big cities like Sydney and Melbourne and it has been in these areas where the Lutheran church was weakest. At present, the new congregations are using any building available for their church services. The only Lutheran church in Melbourne (UELCA) is presently holding as many as six services a Sunday and these are not enough. The UELCA is willing to support heavily the capital expenditure involved in a large building program but has requested outside help from LWF member churches through World Service which it badly needs. Dr. Schuh spent some time in Australia earlier this year and will base his report on this visit. If approved, the request will go into the 1957-58 Statement of Needs to be implemented next year.

Statement of Needs

Along with new decisions to be made and new possibilities to be explored, the Commission's major task during the meeting will be to approve the 1957-58 budget, or Statement of Needs as it is termed in the Department. \$1,700,000 worth of projects in 24 countries will be presented to them by the Geneva office and of this, they will probably approve projects totaling approximately \$1,500,000 before submitting the final Statement to the various National Committees asked to support the program. The one and a half million dollars will be about the same amount as for this year's budget. This figure, however, does not reflect the true extent of the World Service program since all non-church funds are not included. Various governmental and inter-governmental agencies have contributed annually in the past few years more than half a million extra dollars for such World Service projects as resettlement (Inter-Governmental Committee for European Migration), local settlement for refugees in Europe (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and Ford Foundation), material relief in the Middle East (United Nations Relief and Works Agency) and medical relief in Hong Kong (International Co-operation

Administration). For the past two years, World Service has had a working budget of more than \$2,000,000 from all sources, although this too does not include the value of contributed goods.

Again, as in the past two years, World Service aid to the churches of East Germany will be the highest single item in the budget. The continued need for help in their Christian Teaching Program is of paramount importance. Since religious instruction can, in most places, no longer be given in the public schools, the rental, purchase and building of teaching rooms, the training of catechists, and the supplying of books, literature and student scholarships are and will long remain items of top priority. Other needs include materials for church construction, support of welfare institutions and other necessary aspects of church life.

Austria will continue to receive the second highest budget grant because of the large number of refugees still dependent upon outside aid. Some 40,000 are living in primitive barracks under the poorest of conditions and evangelical pastors called upon to serve them are in equal financial need. The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Austria had only 140 pastors in 1945 and now it counts 220. The number of lay church workers, deaconesses, parish assistants and teachers of religion has grown from 154 to 400 in the same period and more persons are still needed. Salaries for these people are seriously low and thus grants-in-aid to pastors' salaries is the first and major request of the Austrian church and the largest item in the World Service budget for this country. Church building and repair, travel loan funds and social services are other items. World Service can also report that during this past year, every Lutheran refugee student in Austria has received financial assistance from the Department.

Other areas receiving large percentages of the Department's budget include Jordan, Syria and Hong Kong with their large relief programs; Great Britain and its church building, spiritual ministry and student aid projects; France and its church building program and Yugoslavia, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland. Each country presents needs to the Department which are considered individually by the Commission

members before appeals are made to National Committees for their support.

Another matter to be taken up by the Commission will be the approval of several more exchangees for the Department's Exchange of Church Workers Program. In April, a Commission committee approved 17 applications for younger pastors, laymen and women to visit churches of other countries in order to learn of new methods and insights which could help them better serve their home churches after their return. The Commission will also discuss ways and means by which the Department can more effectively promote the exchange program. This new type of Inter-Church Aid, an exchange of persons and ideas, is expected to become one of the major tasks of the Department in coming years.

Vacant posts

Two other points for discussion will be the report on the April minority Lutheran churches conference and plans for the 1957 Assembly in Minneapolis. A final and decisively important task also awaits Commission members in London before they can disperse. They will be asked to select a new director for the Department and submit his name to the LWF Executive Committee for their final approval. Reuben Baetz, who has served in the Department since it was formed in Hannover, 1952, will return to his native Canada in September. The posts of Senior Representative in Vienna and London will also be vacated this year and the Commission asked to consider suggestions for filling these. These men will be charged with the responsibility of leading the Department in the new directions selected for it by the Commission in London.

The Commission on World Service consists of five men: Dr. Schuh, the Rev. Henrik Hauge (Norway), Dr. Harry Johansson (Sweden), Bishop Volkmar Hertrich (Hamburg) and Dr. Paul C. Empie (USA, chairman). These same five men have guided the Department since 1952 and now, in London, will point to future trends and responsibilities.

The Department of World Service is the largest in the Federation in terms of budget and staff. Its arms of Christian concern reach out to six of the seven continents and to thousands of the world's needy. Its program is a living demonstration that

Christians in lands of plenty have not forgotten their less fortunate neighbors.

"For just as our neighbor suffers want and is in need of our superabundance, so have we suffered want before God and been in need of his grace. Therefore, as God through Christ has helped us for nothing, so ought we through the body and its work to do nothing but help our neighbor" (Luther, ... WA 7, p. 35, 25ff.).

A. Jean Olson

The European Minority Churches Conference¹

Those who gathered for the first conference for European minority churches at Semmering, Austria, from April 23-27, 1956, were representatives of a special group within the great Lutheran church family. They did not come from strong, flourishing churches with rich theological traditions and a widely diversified church life, but from churches and congregations which had more than once in the course of their frequently bloody history been compelled to retreat in defense and even today find themselves often pushed to the limits of their existence.

Diaspora or minority?

Though they form a group with common characteristics, the diversity among them is great enough. In the very first days of the conference it became clear that they were not there as an assembly of churches representing a *diaspora* in a spiritual and intellectual or even merely geographical relationship to some home church—whether it be to German Lutheranism, to the Lutheran World Federation or to world Lutheranism as such—but were a conference of churches each constituting a *minority* in its relationship to an environment of a different faith. Naturally there were also diaspora churches among them, as for example the groups in Switzerland, in Spain or Portugal which are for the most part German-speaking where the Lutherans as a rule are citizens

of other countries and are really only guests of the country in which they reside. That is at least partially true also of the Lutheran church in Italy and for the Lutheran groups of German, Latvian, Polish, Estonian, Slovakian and Hungarian origin and language united in the Lutheran Council of Britain. These have admittedly begun to take root on new soil, but their history is still only beginning and their active concern for their new country is less a fact than a responsibility. But most of those at the conference represented "indigenous" churches, which constitute in their homelands an organic part of their peoples and which have built up and developed their church life in the course of centuries.

The church and its environment

One may regard as the most typical example of such an indigenous church the church of the Transylvanian-Saxons. This church forms only a small minority of the population of Rumania, it is true, but at the same time numbers almost 100% of the German-speaking population of Transylvania among its members. Moreover, it has always been the bearer of culture in the nation and, as in all times of crisis, so now too after the last world war it constitutes the country's real strength. In a certain sense this is also true of the Lutheran church in Slovakia, which indeed constitutes only 4% of the population of Czechoslovakia, but a good 20% of the Slovak part of the population and has produced a particularly large number of outstanding personalities in the political and cultural life of the Slovak people. Each church in other words has a firm position among its people.

The situation is quite different for the 200,000 Lutherans among the 23 million Catholics in Poland, where on account of their faith they are regarded, in spite of their Polish nationality, as a foreign body, — or for those in Holland and France who often appear beside the more significant Reformed groups as superfluous fractions, not only to outsiders but sometimes also to themselves. It was surprising that of the statements made at the conference, those which were the most confessionally Lutheran in character came from a French Lutheran, Prof. Theobald Suess.

¹ The Minority Churches Conference in Semmering was sponsored by the Department of World Service in close collaboration with the Department of Theology.

The churches in the various people's democracies, who were represented at the conference by 18 participants, are in an exceptional position. This was expressed in the resolution which was laid before the conference by representatives of the Lutheran churches in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, together with the Polish delegation, in which world Lutheranism was challenged to renewed and energetic support for the establishment of peace and for a happier future for mankind.

And in a special way standing between East and West, the host, the Austrian Lutheran church, represented yet another type. It was perhaps especially to her credit that the conference was privileged to number participants from so many countries, because she had been able to offer the conference a "neutral" meeting place.

The two Hungarian Lutheran churches of Yugoslavia and Rumania unfortunately did not have the opportunity of sending their representatives to Semmering, but they were nevertheless not forgotten at the conference.

Conversation, not mere discussion

In general it may be said of the conference that the lectures, reports, deliberations and sessions had throughout the character of *conversation*—not in the purely technical sense of the word, but in the sense that opposing points of view could be freely presented. For this reason it was not necessary to present reports giving information on the individual churches. In the respective opinions voiced from time to time the peculiar character of the individual churches and groups found open and frank expression and the readiness to learn from one another was particularly gratifying.

One of the Eastern European representatives, for example, made the statement that for him the journey to Semmering would have been worth while if he had no more than heard the report on the instruction of the laity that was built up on the idea of "stewardship". Similarly the comments after Dr. Sovik's slide lecture on the life of the young churches were a unique testimony to the fact that the minority churches too, although they themselves do not carry on any foreign mission work, have fully understood the world-wide tasks facing the church today.

On the other hand the reports on Christian charitable activities in the eastern countries, on the work in those institutions which still remain and, where these no longer exist, on the awakening of the congregations in the face of the call to *neighborly service*, were followed with great attention. And the problem of church literature which has, in a special way, been given as a task to the Church of the Word, has precisely in present-day Eastern Europe numerous new aspects about which the participants learned a great deal.

Missionary consciousness

Though the themes of this fraternal conversation were predominantly the problems of the minorities, it nevertheless became very clear more than once in the course of the conference that the small Lutheran groups do not by any means feel themselves to be in a situation without hope or even purpose. The nobility and responsibility of such an existence as a minority was seen from a biblical standpoint already in the opening service in Bishop May's sermon on Peter's word to the "strangers and pilgrims" (I Pet. 2: 11 ff.) and was further pursued theologically by the two lecturers, Superintendent Fritz Zerbst of Austria and Professor Theobald Suess of France. Now and then it was even necessary to call to mind that although fidelity to the truth does indeed bind one to a clear confessional standpoint, nevertheless the commandment of love demands a unity above and beyond confessional frontiers. This duty of confession however was clear to all, not only in relation to the churches of another confession, but also in relation to the "other gospel" of the world, the gospel of the possibility of being able to live without God. It is not here a matter of preserving what is one's own. It is precisely when we want to "conserve" our treasures, when we do not go out to all people, that we cease to be a church—everyone testified to that. This "missionary" consciousness was indeed one of the most gratifying facts of the whole conference.

Minorities in world perspective

Was that then the significance of the conference, that it recorded the different standpoints and perhaps besides this

established the fact of certain common points of view?

Even that would not have been without significance. It is not only the "large" churches from whom something can be learned. For *world Lutheranism* however it is of great importance that the European minority churches have met each other for the first time to talk together about their common problems. Perhaps it is also true, as was said at the conference, that 100,000 Lutherans in Poland or France have far more significance than the same number in Berlin or Stockholm.

But through conversation between such varied churches the conference also rendered an *ecumenical* service. In bringing together small groups from the whole continent of Europe it created, in the same way as the Marangu conference did for Africa, the possibility of reflecting in a new way on the Christian mandate in relation to this continent. In addition to this is the fact that not a few of these churches have direct daily contact with other confessions—one has only to think of the Lutherans in Rumania, who live and work in the midst of an orthodox church 60 times as great in numbers so that their experiences may well be of some importance for ecumenical conversation as a whole.

But it should also not be forgotten that the conference had its significance for *international understanding*. In this we are thinking not only of the fact that people from East and West were able to discuss their problems together, but also of the fact that the meeting in Semmering included people from eleven different nations (not counting *guests* from Scandinavia, Finland, America and other countries), indeed such opposites as the Germans and the French, Hungarians and Slovaks, Poles and Germans.²

That such conferences might become in future a permanent element of the work of the Federation was a wish based not only on the joy of the participants but also in the interest of the church.

Laszlo G. Terray

² One of the results of this conference is the fact that the Lutheran churches in Czechoslovakia have now invited a church delegation from the West, and the Polish church has invited the Rev. Mogens V. Zeuthen, LWF Secretary for Minority Lutheran Churches in Europe, to visit them this autumn [Ed.].

Theology

First International Congress on Luther Research

Aarhus, Denmark. August 13–18, 1956.

The Commission on Theology of the Lutheran World Federation, at its meeting in Hamburg at the beginning of 1955, worked out the plans which finally led to the International Congress on Luther Research, to be held at Aarhus, Denmark, from August 13–18. At the Congress an attempt will be made to survey for the first time the extent of all Luther research of the last decade. The principal tasks of present-day Luther research are to be discussed under various themes. In addition the congress will fulfill the purpose, which can hardly be underestimated, of exchanging information on the state of Luther research in the various countries.

A fundamental element of the Congress will be the reports from different lands which will be given particularly at the evening meetings. The Department of Theology is of the opinion that such a conference will be extraordinarily valuable for future Luther research, principally because not only in the motherland of the Reformation and in the Scandinavian lands has Luther research long been zealously pursued but because in other lands too, in a surprising way, something like a Luther renaissance is in progress.

Provision has been made for discussion of the following themes, among others, from the realm of Luther research:

Problems of Luther biography will be treated by Professor Roland Bainton, who has become known through his book *Here I Stand* (German edition *Hier stehe ich*), and by Professor Heinrich Bornkamm.

The Weimar edition of Luther's works: by Professor Dr. H. Rückert, chairman of the Commission for the Edition of Martin Luther's Works.

Luther's understanding of Scripture: by Professor Dr. G. Ebeling, Zurich; Canon Dr. J. A. Atkinson, Leicester; Docent Dr. R. Josefson, Uppsala.

Luther's doctrine of sanctification: by Professor Dr. Regin Prenter, Aarhus and Professor Philip Watson, M. A., B. D., Cambridge.

Luther's doctrine of the church. An attempt has been made to get a scholar from Germany, one from Scandinavia and one from England or America to speak on each of these themes.

Apart from these lectures, Professor Loewenich, Erlangen, Dr. Thestrup Pedersen, Lunde, Fyn, Denmark, Professor Waldo

Vinay, Rome, Professor Gordon Rupp, Cambridge and Professor Th. Suess, Paris, as well as Professor George Forell, U.S.A., will give reports from their countries on the state of Luther research in their areas.

About 100 scholars from various lands and churches are expected at the Congress.

Hans H. Weissgerber

FROM LANDS AND CHURCHES

Germany

Conscription and Conscientious Objection in Germany

The rearmament which has been begun in the Federal Republic of Germany has led both in the general public as a whole and in Christian circles to lively and in part passionately excited debate whose end cannot yet be seen even after the passing of the conscription law not long ago. In regard to the numerous questions thus raised, the formation of an unbiased opinion and a considered and objective judgment is made difficult by the fact that fundamental attitudes and considerations arising out of the particular situation overlap and can be separated only with difficulty, in many cases not at all. There are first of all the basic questions of the justification of war and the demand for military service, especially today: whether in the age of weapons of mass destruction one can still speak at all of the possibility of a "just war", of a "jure bellare"; whether the state is morally authorized to demand military service of each of its citizens; whether in that case the right of objection to military service on conscientious grounds, guaranteed by the West German constitution is to be regarded as an exceptional right granted by the state, as a disobedience of the law tolerated by the state or as the self-limitation of the state and its authority out of respect for the standpoint of conscience, etc. Alongside these there are from the outset the other questions arising out of political and military considerations, whether the treaties of alliance or the position of Germany between West and East compel the setting-up of a military force of half a million men; how the present world situation is to be judged, whether one can speak of genuine tendencies towards a relaxation of tension; whether arming with conventional weapons will bring on the danger of an atomic war or, on the contrary, hold it in check; whether general conscription is still practical these days from a purely military

point of view; what effects its introduction will have on the reunification of Germany and for the population of the Soviet-occupied zone; whether a new "militarism" must not have a damaging influence on the still unstable spiritual and intellectual situation of German democracy, etc.

It is understandable that in the deliberations of responsible political leaders and military men the reasons arising out of the particular situation should play an important role and that in many cases there exists the inclination to subordinate to them the debate on fundamentals and to let the decision be essentially determined by what is deemed to be necessary for the state. Nevertheless, even here the fundamental questions cannot be avoided. Anyone for instance who followed the deliberations of the *Bundestag* during the third reading of the conscription bill could at times have had the vivid sensation of listening to the proceedings of a church synod and not to the deliberations of a political body. On the other hand, the discussions within the church cannot be confined purely to the fundamental consideration of the Christian attitude to these questions (what is here commanded, allowed or forbidden for the Christian?), but must, whether they will or no, consciously, sometimes unconsciously, include a certain view, colored in one way or another, of the given situation.

Thus it is difficult, in the tangled growth of partially contradictory expressions of opinion and attitudes, to take a stand and get a general view. It might facilitate orientation and, in addition, contribute to a reduction in the amount of speaking at cross purposes, if on all sides one kept to two themes. In the first place, rearmament, the introduction of general conscription and the right of conscientious objection to military service are not all in the same plane as if one could only accept or reject all three together. Starting with the last, it is largely the case that anyone who refuses military service in general, or in the present situation, will also oppose the introduction of conscription and rearmament. But the reverse is not true. It is not necessarily so that anyone who assents to rearmament as necessary, or has come to accept it, must

therefore assent to general conscription. Anyone who agrees to conscription should precisely on this account be concerned to see that the question of conscientious objection to military service find a fine and worthy solution. The second point has already been said in effect. To speak up for the conscientious objector and to assent to conscientious objection are two different things and must not be confused. One can—and it occurs in many cases—thoroughly advocate that the right of conscientious objection to military service should be legally protected without personally making use of the right. The person who as a Christian intercedes for conscientious objectors does not need to be himself an advocate of “Christian pacifism” and should not be addressed as such just because he does. Precisely in this point much obscurity became apparent in the evaluation which was given in public to the proposal of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKiD) “to regulate by law the protection of conscientious objection”. It may be that the title under which this proposal was published, “The church and conscientious objection”, led to a certain misunderstanding. The question was not what the church’s fundamental attitude to conscientious objection was and thus her attitude to the more general question of the justification of war and military service, nor was it even a question *whether* the church should support the legal protection of conscientious objectors, but only *how* the right to objection to military service on grounds of conscience, already recognized in the constitution, should be regulated in detail after the introduction of general conscription so that the interests of a genuine decision of conscience might be furthered. For example, the argumentation—correct in itself—that the sign of a genuinely conscientious decision consists in a person’s being prepared to draw the consequences of, and if necessary to suffer for, one’s conviction is out of place when the state through its legislation expressly states that it does not wish to let such an extreme conflict arise. Catholic statements on this point have often been clearer than many Evangelical ones.

Whoever limits himself to the statements that have been made in public can easily gain the impression that the controversy on conscription and conscientious objection is

affecting the Evangelical church in Germany much more than the Catholic church. In Catholic circles opinion holds usually to the traditional line of the “*bellum justum*”, that in a case of defense the Catholic does not only have the right but also the duty to military service; that “the Christian is supposed to defend his country”; and that the Catholic therefore can never refuse military service in a general sense, but only in the concrete instance of an objectively unjust war. But things are not so simple as they might seem according to this. When we look more closely we shall find that in the Catholic church as well, questions involving the right of military service under present conditions are being openly discussed and find contradictory answers.¹ Only in time of war is the duty of military service given absolutely, whereas doubts are being brought forward against general peacetime conscription even by theologians in prominent ecclesiastical positions. In many instances the Pope has expressed himself against so-called “ABC weapons” and their use, most sharply and most clearly in his his Christmas message of 1955. Among Catholics too the question is being discussed whether it is still relevant to view the modern weapons of mass destruction only as an intensification of conventional weapons, or rather whether with the existence of these weapons a completely new situation has not been created which makes the use of the category of a “*bellum justum*” impossible because of the uncontrollability of these weapons which are, in effect, no longer weapons but only means of annihilation. And if it is maintained on the one hand that for evaluating the use of these weapons as a last resort in a just war of defense the question is whether their effects are controllable, there are no lack of voices being raised even on the Catholic side who therefore declare that the Christian is not allowed to use such unethical means, even in a case of just necessity of defense. In this connection we mention that in the decisive parliamentary debate on conscientious objection it was precisely a Catholic, Mr. Nellen, who as the only representative of the CDU (Christian Democratic Union), maintained that consideration be given to concrete conscientious decisions and who almost literally took over as his own the

1. Cf. Herder-Korrespondenz 1955, pp. 509ff and 560ff.

proposal of the Bonn representative of the EKID.²

Thus the same questions concern each of the confessions, only that on the Evangelical side they are brought out before the public with an incomparably strong volume and with the concrete political situation being drawn in much more; whereas the politically active Catholic circles of the Federal Republic more or less as a block have supported rearmament, it is just in this point that the tempers of Protestants have become heated for or against. We shall not go into detail on the course of the discussion or on the arguments presented by either side but we shall limit ourselves to the most important standpoints on the part of official representatives of the church to the question of military service and conscientious objection.

The sentences on "What can the church do for peace?" of the statement by the 1950 Synod of the EKID at Berlin-Weissensee have become generally well-known. It was said, "we entreat the governments and representatives of our people not to be driven by any power in the world into the delusion that war could bring a solution and turning point to our need. We welcome thankfully and with expectation that the governments may protect by their constitutions those who refuse military service for the sake of conscience. We implore all governments in the world to guarantee this protection. He, who refuses military service for the sake of conscience should be certain of the intercession of the church both before governments and before God."³ The chairman of the council, Bishop Dibelius, underlined the significance of these sentences. He said that his statement in a book, that in future wars the church will be duty-bound before her Lord to stand by conscientious objectors even if she can not approve of their decision, would have raised a storm of indignation twenty years or more ago but that today it is said by the representatives of the whole of Evangelical Christianity in Germany with one accord. In Elbingerode 1952 the Synod reaffirmed the statement of Weissensee that "We respect every conscientious decision which is made before God in view of the obedience demanded by government. But

we are not able to give counsel that is binding in the same way for all. To those many among you, however, who feel yourselves, to be in a situation in which you could take up arms only with a bad conscience, we say once again that we are willing to intervene not only in intercession before God but also before the political powers for those who for reasons of conscience refuse military service."⁴ When the rearmament of the Federal Republic was decided upon, the reintroduction of military service also drew closer. The Council of the EKID called together, at the suggestion of the Synod of Espelkamp in 1955, a committee of both persons who were experts on the subject and members of the Synod in order to work out in view of the approaching legislation an official opinion on the legal regulation of the protection of conscientious objectors. The proposal presented by this committee, to which was added a thorough preamble and an appendix containing the most important statements by the church on the question of conscientious objection, found the concurrence of the Council and was presented to the competent governmental offices. The representative of the EKID at Bonn, Prälat D. Hermann Kunst, represented the suggestions of the proposal at various times in writing and orally to the governmental offices concerned and in the committee discussions of the *Bundestag*. At this year's extraordinary session at the end of June in Berlin, the Synod of the EKID, in the context of a theological declaration—which found for this reason at first little attention by the public—made a clear statement on the means of mass destruction "which no end can justify". On the question of conscientious objection it did not offer any new resolution but simply received a report on the state of negotiations. On the other hand it had to be concerned with the question of conscription simply in view of the discussion which was taking place in the Evangelical church in Germany. On this point the views were sharply conflicting. On the one hand the Erlangen theologian Walter Künneth, in an essay that found a great deal of notice and which was given to all member of the *Bundestag* by the government—something, which as far as we know, did not happen with the proposal of the Council which was an official document—proclaimed the

2. Cf. for the following the Record of the German Bundestag, 150th session, July 6 and 7, 1956.

3. "Kirche und Kriegsdienstverweigerung, Ratsschlag des Rats der EKD", 1956, p. 35 f.

4. *ibid.*, p. 37

"general rule according to which there is a Christian duty of obedient military service without qualms of conscience" and that "according to Evangelical Lutheran doctrine the appeal to conscience in rejecting military and war service" can not be justified on Christian grounds.⁵ On the other hand the periodical, *Stimme der Gemeinde*, presented an article with the title "Conscription today is sin". From many sides the Synod was asked to pass a resolution against the introduction of universal military service. After intensive committee discussion the Synod chose another way. A vote on this question would have given a false picture and would have resulted in misinterpretations. Many members of Synod who personally shared reservations against conscription would not have voted for a resolution against it because they would have seen in such a move an inadmissible intrusion on the part of the church in the political area; a rejection of the resolution, however, would have become a political act as well, as if the Synod had by such an act approved of the introduction of subscription. And so the Synod unanimously commissioned a delegation of five members to inform the officials in Bonn "about the viewpoints and concerns which the members of the Synod had expressed about the effects of conscription" but at the same time to intercede in Pankow [the corresponding government quarters of East Berlin] that no pressure be used to force entrance into the military forces. Immediately before the second reading of the conscription bill the delegation completed its task in Bonn. During the third reading, the speaker for the CDU attempted to minimize the significance of this position which was not in line with the position of the government coalition; from other expressions of opinion it was apparent that a very strong impression was received of the EKdD delegation's visit and of the way in which the reservations were presented. An actual success was no longer to be expected after the committee discussions of the *Bundestag* had ended, and therefore the subscription legislation was accepted after a continuous session late into the night by a vote of 269 to the Opposition's 166, with 20 members abstaining.⁶

The position of the Synod found an unpleasant postlude because of the controversy around the evaluation of a private petition which was circulated during the session and which was meant to support the delegation. When it became known in public that, in addition to some members of the Council and of the Church Conference, 62 members of Synod out of 120 had in writing supported the reservation against the introduction of conscription in the present situation, this was publicized and used as propaganda in part as an official stand "of a clear majority of the highest parliament of the Evangelical church" whereas such a vote had been distinctly avoided by the Synod. This let loose on the other hand "rectifications" and "sharp protests" against "misuse for political purposes" and "unbrotherliness". However these then incited misuse for political propagandistic purposes as well, only on the other side. But these attempts to set the matter right were fated from the start, for no step had been taken to limit and rectify the way in which advocates of conscription elevated the personal opinion of Professor Küneth, with which they were in agreement, to a position of a quasi official doctrinal declaration of the Lutheran church. The esteem of the Synod was not served by all of this, and in addition to forcing into the background the other decisions and resolutions of the Synod, this unnecessary and deplorable controversy obscured from the church public the fact that the regulation of conscientious objection contained in the law was far behind the wishes presented by the Evangelical church—and also behind corresponding regulations in the Anglo-Saxon countries, e. g. Great Britain.

The Bonn constitution states in Art. 4, para. 3 that "no one may be forced against his conscience into military service" and provides for more precise regulation by federal legislation. The Council of the EKdD had directed in its proposal to the state the urgent request "not to limit narrowly or even schematically the circle of conscientious objections to which it will grant a hearing", drew attention to the fact that "for the Evangelical Christian the voice of conscience is perceived in a concrete situation and is not to be measured by general rules", and proposed that the decision in cases involving conscientious objection not be given to officials responsible for

5. In *Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung*, 1956, pp. 212ff.

6. *Bundestag Record*, p. 8894.

substitute military service, but to other offices independent also in personnel".⁷

The government draft of the bill had onesidedly limited conscientious objection to rejection of the use of force as such. Para. 25 read, "Who for reasons of fundamental religious or ethical conviction rejects in general the use of force in the relations between states and nations and therefore refuses war service with arms has to perform a substitute civilian service instead of military service . . ." This wording covered only fundamental pacifists; it would be inapplicable, for example, to Catholics or Lutherans. Decisions on what constitutes conscientious objection were to be made by special committees in the county substitute service offices which were provided.

In the committee negotiations between the first and the second readings, among other things proposed by the representative of the EKID, was the following version: "Who for religious or ethical conviction of conscience opposes participation in the use of arms between states can refuse war service with arms", a version whose content was taken up again during the third reading as a compromise proposal. The committee concerned decided for the milder version, which we present below, and improved the stipulations in regard to the proofing committees.

The Social Democratic Party proposed as a version for para. 25, "Who for reasons of conscience refuses war service with arms is not to be conscripted for military service. He shall perform a civilian service or, upon his own application, a service without arms in the military forces"; in the course of debate the beginning of the sentence was changed to read, "Who on the basis of Art. 4 of the constitution . . ." On the matter of decision as to whether a certain case is to be considered conscientious objection, process in the regular courts was suggested.

Discussion during the third reading was carried on especially at this point on a gratifyingly high level and was impressive because of the conscientious earnestness of many of the things said. In essence, discussion centered on the question of whether the state should respect every genuine and well-based decision of conscience, or whether for the sake of the common good and collective security it must draw certain limits,

and whether or not in addition to fundamental conscientious objection there should be recognized and guaranteed that type of conscientious objection which grows out of a particular situation. The over-simplified question was asked, "Should only the Quaker and the Mennonite be protected? Or also the man who may go to war, but in a certain moment says, 'I can't any longer. To use such weapons is sin. That goes against my conscience. At this point I say no'?"⁸

It is to be regreted that the fronts—apart from one praise-worthy exception—did not cut across party lines. The total impression of the discussion was summed up by a recognized daily paper in these words: "With astonishment listeners heard how the Social Democrats stood on the side of liberal and Christian concepts, whereas the Christian Democrats actually were forced to give voice to a political stand that is tactically dictated. . . . So completely changed are the fronts."⁹

The end result saw all revisions rejected with the version of the committee accepted. "Who for reasons of conscience opposes participation in every use of arms between states and therefore refuses war service with arms, has to perform a substitute civilian service outside the armed forces instead of military service". The wording of this version is certainly an improvement over the original government proposal and approaches the version proposed by the representative of the EKID (see above). The use, however, of the phrase "every" instead of "the" use of arms means an important and basic limitation.¹⁰ Protected beyond doubt are, by this wording, only fundamental conscientious objectors; without doubt those not included are "those who refuse out of a particular situation" for political or personal reasons. The question remains open whether those "concrete conscientious objectors" are included or not, who without being pacifists in the strict sense of the word, nevertheless refuse military service for conscientious reasons at the present time in view of atomic weapons or in case of a war considered to be unjust. Here it will depend on the executive directives and their administration, above all at first.

8. *ibid.*, p. 8854 (Dr. Schmid of Frankfurt).

9. *Die Welt*, No. 158, July 9, 1956, p. 3.

10. Actually only two letters were added: "jeder" (every), instead of "der" (the).

7. *ibid.*, p. 10.

Speaking for a narrow interpretation of the word "every" may be the fact that the opposing amendments were all rejected. Against such an interpretation is the assurance given many times by the representatives of the government coalition that not only the standpoint of fundamental pacifists and sectarians was to be protected, but every genuine conviction of conscience.¹¹ The practice must and will tell. The danger exists, which was pointed out in the discussion in the *Bundestag*, that in the future there could be two kinds of conscientious objectors, those who appeal to para. 25 of the conscription law and those who directly appeal to Art. 4, para. 3 of the constitution, which remains in force as the fundamental law now as before. Here we may expect all kinds of difficulty too for the Evangelical church in the realm of pastoral care and counsel. Incidentally, it is thoroughly to be expected that the number of actual conscientious objectors will not be nearly so large as many assume judging by the present controversies.

To sum up, there is unanimity in the area of the Evangelical church of Germany concerning the practical consequence that the church must intervene on behalf of the person who refuses military service for reasons of conscience, even if it is, for some, expressly intervention on behalf of an erring conscience. But there is no agreement on the fundamental questions of the evaluation of general conscription and of the right of "concrete" refusal of military service, whether arising generally out of atomic war or out of a specific case of war. Here opinions diverge, not only between the confessions, but also within them: Küneth doesn't speak for all Lutherans. But nevertheless, in contrast to earlier times that are not so very long past, one can also notice something common to all. On all sides there is the awareness that the problems here confronting us defy an all too premature and neat solution. The matter-of-fact way in which the state was ascribed the right to take its citizens by force for military service, and in which then such service by the Christian was made into an ethical conscience-blinding duty, it past. Sentences which Kirn once put forward in 1909 no theologian of ethics would write today: "Participation as a matter of calling in a

war already declared is a part of one's duty as a citizen, even then when the conscience of the citizen condemns the same. For even if the men in politics should have made a mistake, he may not withdraw in the face of the present fact of his country's need".¹² The attitude of the Evangelical churches in Germany to all questions involving war and military service during the 19th and 20th century was influenced to the core by the situation at the beginning of the Napoleonic wars of freedom with their peculiar mixture of idealistic, patriotic enthusiasm and the Christian affirmation of a just, defensive war. If one realizes how strong traditions and thought patterns continue in their effect also, perhaps especially, in the area of the church, one will not underestimate the significance of the changes which have taken place. Nevertheless we dare not content ourselves with the present situation. In the long run it will remain not only an unsatisfactory situation but also an objectively unbearable one, that opinions diametrically diverge even among members of the same confession, that one performs and affirms military service not only as a positive ordinance of the state but for the sake of God and conscience, and the other, for the sake of the very same conscience bound to God, opposes military service. Therefore we shall have to continue, for the sake of true clarity in these questions, to struggle with and to listen to one another.

(Completed in July 1956)

Georg Hoffmann

Austria

The Lutheran Church in Austria

Impressions of a Study Tour

In response to an invitation of the Evangelical Church in Austria the thirteen vicars and the Director of the Church of Hannover's practical theological seminary connected with the ancient monastery at Loccum visited the congregations and institutions of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg

11. *Bundestag Record*; e. g. p. 8847 (Haasler), and elsewhere.

12. O. Kirn, *Grundriß der theologischen Ethik* [Outline of theological ethics], 1912 (1909), p. 72.

Confession in Austria from May 24 to June 4, 1956.

The Church of Hannover—like, incidentally, the Churches of Bavaria and Württemberg—"lends" one of its vicars for a period of one to two years to assist in pastoral work in Austria. One of these vicars is at the moment in Loccum. Thus contact already existed between the church in Austria and the seminary at Loccum and it was this factor, together with the generous support of the Lutheran World Federation and the home church, which led to this study tour.

Now one must realize that the seminary in Loccum, more than other seminaries, is very conscious of being bound by its tradition as a Protestant monastery to "*stabilitas loci*". The fact, therefore, that such an extended journey leading beyond one's own borders, was actually undertaken, implying a break in the tradition, expresses the special significance which was attached to such contact between churches in the framework of theological education.

To wish to give a comprehensive and really adequate picture after a mere twelve-day visit would certainly be presumptuous. But we who attended congregational gatherings in city and country (in Linz, Thening and Gmunden) and the Gustavus Adolphus Festival in Braunau, conversed with leading men of the church and with many pastors, young theologians and our generous hosts and simply kept our eyes open, were nevertheless able to get a vital and many-sided impression, especially because we came from a totally different kind of Lutheran church.

The dispersion

It was of course clear to us that *diaspora* means dispersion. Of the 6,900,000 inhabitants of Austria over 400,000 are Lutherans, that is, less than 7 per cent. But the percentage is not the same everywhere. In Burgenland, the most eastern province, the situation is better (about 15 per cent), whereas in the Tirol the diaspora situation is especially critical (it was only in 1953 that a second pastorate in addition to the one at Innsbruck was established in Kufstein). There are communities where the majority of the population is Protestant and there are very many more in which there is not even one Lutheran. From a distance this may seem a less difficult situation than when one actually sees it. We became very

reflective in the process. Does the effort really pay to go all that distance in order then to give Bible instruction to but two or three children for only an hour? Can one demand of a child that he live as an outsider in school and village? If one proceeds to do so nevertheless one must consider why. The diaspora brings up the question again and again, "What do you really believe?" Then there is the physical burden. It took the vicar in Linz a whole day going and coming (by train, bus and on foot) to give sick communion to a dying man in Mühlviertel (which lies north of the Danube toward the Böhmerwald). And the pastor in Braunau reported that he travels well over a thousand miles a week in visiting the scattered preaching stations and places of instruction.

The past

A hundred and seventy-five years ago, on October 13, 1781, the Emperor Josef II proclaimed the Edict of Tolerance, thereby ending over 200 years of persecution. The Lutheran pastors and teachers had long since been driven out (1626). But hidden Bibles and devotional books had given sustenance to the Lutheran faith. In 1781, 70 000 people allowed themselves to be publically listed as acknowledging the Augsburg Confession. This period which has molded the face of the Lutheran church in Austria up to the present day is spoken of gladly and with justified pride. To mention but one example: Until the 'thirties of this century the church was a federation of more or less independent congregations. There are many among the laity who speak out for every congregation again supporting itself.

Since 1781 the church has had a five-fold increase in members. After the turn of the century the "Los-von-Rom" movement caused large numbers of people to leave the Roman church and join the Lutheran church. But it seems that people were not too happy about this fact because such a decision often meant not a decision for the Gospel but merely one against the spirit of the Catholic church. The fact that tolerance was decreed on the basis of the rationalist attitude of Josef II and the fact of the growth of the church in the time of the "Los-von-Rom" movement have given the Austrian church the reputation of being

especially liberal and "culturally Protestant". This is a very one-sided view, though the influence of the movement is still to be seen today. Perhaps this prejudice is strengthened by the way in which the history of the Evangelical church in Austria is presented. Loesche's extensive presentation of the "History of Protestantism in Austria" gives a false picture. It seems to us a good thing that at the theological faculty at Vienna a new presentation is being prepared.

Refugees

In many circles of the Evangelical church in Austria there is an awareness of the fact that with the end of the war a new chapter began which presents thoroughly new problems. Looking to the past could be a hindrance for forging new paths. From southeast Europe came Lutherans in great waves—folk Germans—70,000 of them—who streamed into that part of Austria then occupied by the Americans. In their homelands they had lived in churches with an orderly structure, thoroughly individual in character as a folk church. The structure of the Austrian church was strange to them. They were not recognized by the state as citizens (actually only since 1954/55). In many places congregations grew up where there had never been a Lutheran before. The congregation of Braunau/Inn, for example, grew from 400 to 8,000! This meant that the church was faced with tremendous tasks of charity. Without the active help of the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches she would have found it impossible. Some of the refugees emigrated to Germany and overseas. It seems to us that herein lies now one of the chief problems of the Evangelical church in Austria, how to build up a single church, which can stand together in the service of Christ. It is certain that even in the question of external order a great difference of opinion will of necessity arise. What is needed is certainly great wisdom and patience.

Churches and parish houses

When the Lutherans gathered again in 1781 they were allowed to erect churches, but only on condition that they could not be recognized as such from outside. For this reason these so-called "tolerance

prayer houses" originally had neither steeple, bells nor cross. They had to be at least 50 meters (150 ft.) from a main road (this has proved providential in Linz: the church has a spacious area in front of it and is free from all traffic noise).

The majority of the Lutheran churches were erected in the nineteenth century, in almost every case with the energetic support of the German Gustav Adolf Verein. As a result of the increase in numbers of refugees the Lutheran church today is faced with great building tasks, which can be accomplished only gradually. We were given much cause for reflection by what an old Transylvanian peasant, now living in an industrial housing project in Salzburg, said to us: "In our old home the church was as a matter of course the focal point of the village. Therefore in our new project we at once provided a place for a church. But if we don't start soon, our young people will get used to the idea that we can manage without a church." The help of the Lutheran World Federation is therefore very gratefully received.

Protestant schools?

In Thening, an old peasant congregation, we held a social evening for the congregation in the Protestant school. "Suffer the little children to come unto me" was written over the door. Today the building is being rented to the state school, for since 1938 [the date of the annexation of Austria by Germany] there is no longer a Protestant school system. But one can recognize in the congregation's singing of the chorales where a Protestant school had been. Their influence must have been considerable.

After the dissolution of the Concordat with the Vatican, the Imperial Public School Law of 1869, which is in effect again since 1945, freed the school system from Catholic guardianship. The confessional school system became private. Today the Catholic church is striving with all its power against the public school system. Should not also the Lutheran church again support its own schools? Their advantage would be quite obvious. But the church is able to do this in only a few cases. (For example, the famous school on the Karlsplatz in Vienna is being rebuilt.) For this reason the Lutheran church would not like to see a new

school law. Protestant religious instruction is a regular subject of instruction in the public schools (with the exception of schools which had a different arrangement before 1934). The congregation of Braunau has 42 preaching places. It would be utopian to want to erect Protestant schools everywhere. What happens, for example, if there are only two Protestant children in a village?

The older Protestant schools cannot be re-established for two reasons: firstly because there is a lack of teachers and financial means, and secondly because the children from the many widely scattered localities will not want to go all that way to the village where the church is when attendance at the interdenominational schools [Simultanschulen] in their own villages has become comfortable and customary in the course of the years.

The financial situation

There is a church tax in Austria, but it is not collected from the individual by the state for the church as is the case in Germany. Nor can the church authorities make a tax assessment since the records of the tax offices are not open to their use. Therefore each person hands in his own tax evaluation, those who belong half-heartedly to the church making theirs especially low. The church councils collect the money. This system works quite well in the cities, but in the country the burden often lies on the shoulders of the pastor. At the last General Synod in 1955 (which incidentally meets every six years) voices were raised on behalf of the state's stepping in and collecting the church tax. But as long as the Catholic church does not return to this system, such an unreasonable request is doomed to failure from the start.

Who is to guarantee that the church would not some day again have to regulate its own finances if the state takes a different attitude? Should that which has been built up during the years with great difficulty and under great sacrifice be allowed simply to crumble? True, many problems would be solved in one sweep. The low salaries of the pastors could be raised (at the present time the net average is 2400 Schillings a month or about \$1100 a year!); there would no longer be the bitter business of begging; there would no longer be the danger that pastors leave

their congregations because they become discouraged in view of the future of their children; the education of the theological students could be expanded, etc. But they want to keep the system as it is. Help is given by the Lutheran World Federation in subsidy grants for the pastors' salaries and the pastors in Bavaria aid by giving up part of their own salaries.

The pastors

Taking Austria as a whole, there are about 250 pastors and high school teachers of religion. There is a shortage of sixteen pastors and eleven vicars. That makes for an additional load on those who are already overburdened. When a vacant parish is 25 miles or more away with automobiles available only very seldom, then supplying it becomes impossible. Many pastors have a full teaching load just giving religious instruction in the schools, with the advantage of teaching at only one school, to be sure. But can this continue? Is it possible in such a situation to give pastoral care, without which a diaspora church has no future? (Seventy-five per cent of the marriages are mixed marriages, which always tend toward the Catholic church). Must not all work become of necessity simply routine or lead to resignation? There is a shortage of theological students. And there is no school for deacons or lay preachers. But the responsibilities grow from day to day. Only one example: The state is taking—actually for the first time—a really positive attitude to the Evangelical church. Protestant voters form the balance between the Social Democrats [the Socialists] and the [conservative] People's Party. The church is now asked for her opinion in regard to this or that law. Where are the men who have time and energy in addition to their work to acquire the requisite specialized knowledge for such collaboration in the affairs of the state? The Austrian church is certainly in need of a good number of such "specialists".

Radio

What effect Protestant radio devotions have on the total Austrian population can hardly be overestimated. Many distorted views concerning the Evangelical church are thereby dispelled. Whether moving the broadcasting time from 8 a.m. on Sunday

to 7 a.m., which is a much more unfavorable time, represents a certain tendency, cannot be determined.

Review

The heartiness and openness with which we were received will not be forgotten. We believe that the encounter proved to be of much benefit to both sides. It was certainly a good thing that we were not just observers but that we also took part in congregational gatherings which were conducted under the certainty that "One is your Master ... and all ye are brethren".

Martin Kruse

Hungary

An Introduction to the Evangelical Church in Hungary

I

An introduction to the Evangelical church in Hungary may begin with the description of the *dimensions and surroundings* of this church body. According to latest statistics, of the approximately ten million inhabitants of Hungary 432,961 are Lutherans, that is, about 4.5 percent of the population. This, of course, means that our church is a "diaspora" church, a minority denomination, and Lutherans, in most places, live dispersed among those belonging to other denominations. Immediately after the Reformation about nine-tenths of the population was Lutheran, and it was chiefly the effect of the Counter Reformation that this number was so drastically reduced. At present our church has 434 pastors who regularly conduct services in about 500 churches. Most of our parishes include a number of communal units of civil administration. We have parishes which are composed of fifty communities (Pécs, Kecskemét, Keszthely), while in other parishes the pastors have the task of gathering the Lutheran believers from vast areas of scattered farms (Békéscsaba, Nyiregyháza). With the exception of several predominantly Lutheran regions (Békés County, Kemenesalja, Nyírség, Nógrád County) our parishioners live

in a Roman Catholic and Reformed environment.

Only a pure *preaching* of the Word is able to keep our congregations together. Following ancient traditions, preaching in our church on Sundays is according to prescribed texts. After formerly using Scripture lessons appointed by the ancient church, the Württemberg, Rhenish, Saxon, Eisenach, Swedish and Finnish church orders, we have followed in the last three years a new Hungarian selection of texts which consists of passages from the Old Testament, the Gospels and the Epistles. In preparing their sermons our pastors are assisted by the exegetical studies and meditations which are regularly published in our pastors' monthly, while our parishioners are prepared for the hearing of God's Word by a special column in our church weekly. In addition to the Sunday morning and afternoon services we have Bible classes for the spiritual upbuilding of our congregations. These are regular occasions for preaching, but besides these, certain special preaching seasons are also observed by arranging series of services in Advent and Lent, in Passion Week and in the special Weeks of Prayer.

So-called "family services" take place on weekdays and are attended by adults as well as by young people and children, with a specifically educational character in order to inculcate the knowledge which our faith and Christian life require. Special mention must be made of the catechetical sermons. The general practice of these special sermons was established after World War II, and they have proved very effective in educating our church members in the Lutheran spirit. Not only children but also adults come to hear these sermons.

Most of our congregations observe the institution of the "love feast" when the believers, once a month on a Sunday afternoon, enjoy the brotherly fellowship of the table, getting acquainted with one another and listening together to fitting music and to the exposition of the Scriptures.

We have various ways of fulfilling Christ's missionary command among children and young people. We have our so-called Bible Circles for children, corresponding to the Sunday Schools of churches abroad. In larger parishes the pastor is unable alone to cope with the demands of the children's Bible Circles and so he is

assisted in this work by lay volunteers. These parish workers are then prepared by the pastor, in meetings possibly arranged every week, for their Sunday work. A monthly syllabus of lessons issued by our church leaders is also at their disposal.

In addition to the children's Bible Circles we also have, in most parishes, special Children's Services, at least once every month, in order that our children may grow into the worship life of the Lutheran church. Religious instruction in the schools is optional. Lutheran parents, particularly in the provinces, avail themselves in great numbers of the opportunity to have their children enrolled in the religious instruction that is conducted in the state schools.

The pastors' study groups in the districts pay continual attention in their sessions to the question of religious education. We have published several new textbooks; they are clearly written and easily comply with the educational standards set for such books. They are marked by a Christ-centered emphasis and by the effort to educate our children in the spirit of the Lutheran type of Christianity.

In our program of educating our young people we attach great importance to the institution of confirmation, the custom of which is almost as firmly established in our country as that of baptism. Nearly all of our boys and girls are confirmed between the ages of 12 and 14. We published a new catechism for confirmation instruction in 1954. It is the work of László Benczur.

II

As far as the *general spiritual condition* of our church is concerned, we may say that it has been marked, in the last 15 years, by a process of *renewal*. The most noticeable aspects of this renewal are as follows: 1. the new orientation of theology; 2. the renewal of the content and form of preaching; 3. the revival movements; 4. the enlarged scope of our ministrations; 5. the strengthening of ecumenical contacts.

1. *The new orientation of theology.* Our ministry and congregational life are greatly assisted by our theological activity. Since the time of the Reformation Hungarian Lutheran theology has always had close contacts with the theological schools of our Lutheran brethren abroad, particularly with the German Lutheran faculties of theology,

but we have also been in touch with Scandinavian, Anglo-Saxon and Swiss theology. Also in our theological life the so-called neo-Reformation theology has brought about a decisive change. We believe that the message of the neo-Reformation theology may be summed up in the confession: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God". Hence this new theology is Christ-centered. This insight is obviously not a human discovery, neither the outcome of the speculations made by one person nor by several outstanding theologians, but the gift of the Holy Spirit who has the power to illumine and guide the *studium sacrum* of theology. It is the task of the Holy Spirit continually to bear witness to Christ.

The new theology accepts the Bible as the Book of Christ, does not reject the scandal of the cross and—like its great predecessors, the Apostle Paul and the Reformers—it is determined not to know any thing, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. The main concerns of the new theology are the Word and the church. Both are manifestations of the Spirit's activity.

Surveying this new theology of today, from the viewpoint of faith, we may observe how the Spirit of Christ renews our theologians, prompting them to unite their efforts and make positive contributions to church life.

Significant exegetical works have been written by Dr. Károly Karner, the most important of them probably being his commentary on the Gospel of John. He is also the author of a theological encyclopedia entitled *Introduction to Theology* which will shortly be published, also in the German language, by the publishing firm Evangelische Verlagsanstalt in Berlin.

Another important work of our theologians, the new revision of the Hungarian text of the New Testament, has already been published, and we hope that the Old Testament translation too will appear in print within a few years. Portions of the latter, in trial edition, have already been published. The work of Bible revision is being carried on jointly with the sister Protestant churches under the auspices of the Hungarian Bible Council.

A large-scale enterprise of our professors of theology is a new translation of the Lutheran confessions, bringing the texts up to modern standards. For the first time in

the four centuries of Hungarian Lutheran church history a complete edition of our confessions will be published.

In the Study Commission of the Ecumenical Council of Hungarian Churches our theologians cooperate with the theologians of the other member churches. In the course of this work our Statement on the Evanston themes has been particularly noted. Our joint efforts have been maintained ever since.

Although we always keep our eyes on the theological work of our brethren in other lands, we realize with growing clarity that we have some special problems raised by our present situation which we alone can assess properly, in the light of the Holy Scriptures, and no one can do this work for us.

2. *The renewal of the content and form of preaching* is closely related to the renewal of theology. The two movements complement and determine each other. This is borne out by the study of printed sermons. Most of our congregations would reject as utterly obsolete a preaching that would try to revive the pattern of some sermons published at the beginning of the century. The neo-Reformation theology has been no academic affair, no "*Kathedertheologie*", and it is not surprising that its message today is voiced from our pulpits. The service of preaching has become, in our church also, the only *raison d'être* of theology; all that theology does is done in the interest of preaching.

There has also been a renewal as far as the forms of expression in preaching are concerned. The language of our sermons is now simpler and closer to life. Flamboyant style and studied embellishments no longer divert the attention of the listeners from the only theme, Christ himself. Our preachers try to convey the message in everyday terms to the people of our time who live in a new situation.

3. *Revival movements.* Beginning in the 'thirties, new features have emerged in the life of the Hungarian Lutheran Church: the indications of spiritual revival movements. As to their historical origin, we may trace them back to three impulses. First, to the work of the Scottish Mission in Budapest (Archduchess Maria Dorothea and many other devout souls who prayed for a spiritual awakening). Then to the influence of our Lutheran brethren in northern Euro-

pean countries, particularly in Finland. Pastors who studied in Finland adopted there, and afterwards introduced at home, patterns of Finnish revival preaching. In the third place, we may also mention the work of the World's Student Christian Federation and that of the Young Men's Christian Association.

We note here a few characteristic traits of the revival movements of our country.

(a) These movements, almost without exception, have remained within the church, probably because pastors and laymen have been equally affected by them. The Holy Spirit always calls men to the church. When some people try to destroy the church or lure men away from their congregations, then we may be certain that these attempts are not inspired by the Holy Spirit. Only a spurious "awakening" prompts people to leave the congregation and to establish "the true church of the saints".

(b) There has been a degree of unity among the various trends. They have exhibited various colors, yet their representatives have held themselves to be Lutherans and, probably with a single exception, have been willing to sit down and talk with one another.

(c) Strata of the totally estranged have not been reached—only people with somewhat cooled-off relations. Outsiders have not been won (unlike in the U.S.A. or Great Britain where evangelistic preaching on the street corners, at railway stations and in places of entertainment aims at the conversion of outsiders). The result of the revival movements has rather been the revitalization of the existing congregations.

(d) Unlike the Quaker revivals or the Laestadian awakening in Finland, our revival movements have not been attended by ecstatic phenomena. The central activity of the revival movements has been preaching, and this has been the dominating feature of the evangelistic campaigns, which, as a rule, last a week, and of the "quiet weeks" in the summer. The main emphasis has not been on prayer or sanctification but rather on preaching.

(e) The revival movements have encompassed the Lutherans of the whole country. The specific vocabulary, expressions and illustrations of the revival movements are used today even by those who are essentially unaffected by the impulses of spiritual awakening.

4. *The enlarged scope of our ministrations.* A heightened sense of responsibility for humanity marks the present life of our church. We have realized that the only role of the church among men is serving, not ruling, and that our Lord Jesus Christ will always make places and opportunities of service in our church, among our people dedicated to the task of building up a new country, and also in international life. Because we today recognize this perhaps more clearly than former generations, we can see that it has been due to the work of the Holy Spirit. In 1953 our Synod enacted a new regulation for the charitable activities (*diakonia*) of our church. This service is carried on to aid the workers of the church and individuals and parishes in need. It is the task of the pastors, inspectors and elders to educate the congregations in the way of transforming themselves into communities of love that bear one another's burdens, "promoting" neighborliness, peace and social responsibility and exhorting the congregations to good will towards men, thus encouraging giving by the believers and creating in the financial situation of the parishes the economic conditions necessary for works of charity, both within the congregations and outside them" (Act VIII).

Our existing charitable institutions are the fruits of Christian love inspired by faith. At present we have 17 such institutions with 490 inmates (about 100 mentally defective children, 40 cripples, 38 able-bodied orphans and the rest old people, including 56 former church workers). The staff of the institutions consists of about 160 members of whom about a third regard their work as a calling in faith, while the rest are simply wage-earners. The recruitment of suitable staff is a great problem. Our charitable institutions merely complement the work of *diakonia* that is carried on in the congregations. We regard this work as preaching by deeds.

Another branch of our *diakonia* is the aiding of the congregations. The national organ of this work is the Aid to the Congregation (formerly Gustavus Adolphus Society) devoted to the task of supporting parishes with costly construction projects or in the process of formation or with large "diaspora" areas, so that they may worship and serve without interruption due to financial reasons.

Our church makes provision for the pensions of our church workers and also for their recreation, chiefly in our three health resorts. The retired pastors have their separate home at Gyenesdiás, while the home for pastors' widows is maintained in Kistarcsa.

5. *The strengthening of ecumenical contacts.* Owing to the oppressive measures of Roman Catholicism through the centuries, Protestants in Hungary necessarily had to hold together, sharing their church buildings and, in certain respects, exchanging the services of their pastors. As a result of these experiences of the past even a certain form of intercommunion has come into being, particularly in the "diaspora" congregations where Lutheran and Reformed believers may observe their own rites while partaking together of the Lord's Supper as administered either by a Lutheran or a Reformed pastor. It is an indication of the worldwide revival of ecumenical effort that we too have strengthened our contacts with members of the other Protestant denominations (Baptists, Methodists) whom we regard as our brethren in Christ. It seems to us that, in our country, the intensification of confessional consciousness has paralleled the development of ecumenical mentality.

But in our country, as elsewhere, a great deal of misunderstanding, lack of understanding, suspicion and calumny has attended the progress of the ecumenical movement. We nevertheless believe that this movement of church unity actually reflects the integrating work of the Holy Spirit. We realize that the World Council of Churches is not a world church, neither is it simply a united action of Christians or a mere agency for coordinating ecclesiastical contacts. Even the partial unity which it represents is a great gift, the gift of the Holy Spirit. The World Council of Churches offers the foretaste of the One Christian Church, and we realize that, in the ecumenical movement, God offers wonderful and unheard-of opportunities not only to theologians, but to all Christians who, coming from faraway lands and various denominations, may now meet as brethren in Christ and have discussions with one another.

We try to maintain the ties of Christian brotherhood not only in our country but also beyond the frontiers of this land. Our church is a member of the Lutheran World

Federation and of the World Council of Churches. In 1952 we sent a six-member delegation to the Hannover Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation. The delegation of Hungarian Protestantism to the Evanston Assembly had two Lutheran members. At Evanston we invited the World Council of Churches to have the 1956 meeting of its Central Committee in Hungary. We have also tried to make our contribution, within the limits of our possibilities, to the work of study conducted by the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation. Our relations with the Lutheran churches of Czechoslovakia and Eastern Germany have been significantly strengthened. The Presiding Bishop of our church, Lajos Vetó, is a member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs and of the Faith and Order Commission.

We believe that the strengthening of our church's international relations also serves the welfare and peace of mankind. We hope that our relations will be further cemented and we may have in the future still closer contacts with the Christians and non-Christians of other countries.

III

Having enumerated the indications of our church's renewal, let us survey the organization, press and finances of our church.

The organization of the church. The 1952-1953 session of our Synod redefined, on the basis of historic traditions, the polity of our church. The constitution of our church embodies the congregational principle inasmuch as all ecclesiastical authority has its roots in the congregations. All members of the higher ecclesiastical organs are elected, either directly or indirectly, by the congregations, and thus the legislation and government of the church express the common will of the church members. Besides this democratic trait, our church polity has the other characteristic of being informed by the principle of superintendence which establishes an order of precedence in the relations of the self-governing bodies of our church to one another. The district, which comprises a number of parishes, is led by the Senior and the Inspector who act, at the same time, as the joint presidents of the district's presbytery. The Senior has the task of supervising

the good order of the congregations and the faithful service of the pastors. He is elected for six years. The diocese comprises several districts and is led by the Bishop and Diocesan Inspector who at the same time act as joint presidents of the Diocesan Council. The Bishop is elected to serve until he reaches retirement age. Our church has two dioceses: the Northern and the Southern Dioceses. The Bishop of the former is Lajos Vetó, Ph.D., D.D., and of the latter Lászlá Dezséry, D. D. Our supreme ecclesiastical organ is the General Convention, the Presidium of which is composed of the General Inspector, at present Ernest Mihályfi, a layman, the Presiding Bishop, now Dr. Lajos Vetó, and the General Secretary who is now Karoly Grünvalszky.

The pastors of our church are trained in the Lutheran Theological Academy. Only men and women who have secondary school diplomas and satisfy the ecclesiastical requirements are admitted as students by the Commission on Admissions. The bishops take turns to preside over the sessions of the Commission. The course of training takes five years. During this time the students have opportunities to become familiar with all fields of church work. The greatest number of hours each week is allocated to the teaching of Biblical subjects. There is also a strong emphasis on systematic theology. Besides Hebrew, Greek and Latin, modern languages are also taught as obligatory courses, German in the first two years and English or Slovak in the third and fourth years. (It might be mentioned here that in our Hungarian Lutheran church even today, three languages are used in worship: besides Hungarian services, church services in Slovak are conducted in about 50 parishes and services in German in about 25 parishes.) The faculty of the Academy consists of 7 ordinary professors, the Director of the Pastors' Training Institute and lecturers.

The Pastors' Training Center is a dormitory as well as a practical training center for the students. The average enrollment is 40.

In connection with the Theological Academy we must mention the cooperation of the professors with the pastors in the post-graduate conferences and in the pastors' study groups. The national leader of these

groups is Bishop László Dezséry who is responsible for assigning the themes which are then studied and discussed in the pastors' study groups of the districts. The pastors are effectively assisted in this work by the professors of theology, and the libraries of the Academy and the General Convention are also at their disposal. We mention here the new system of home scholarships established by the pastors' study groups for young ordained pastors who desire to pursue further studies in theology. These scholarships are granted for one year. At present we have 5 such holders of home scholarships.

Our *church press* has the task of bringing the Gospel to the Lutheran believers of our country. We have a national weekly, the *Evangelikus Elet* (Evangelical Life) and a special monthly for pastors, the *Lelkipásztor* (The Pastor). We publish every year the Lutheran Calendar and, as a guide to the Bible, the Hungarian version of the Moravian *Losungen*, that devotional book known the world over. The greatest publishing event of the last year was the printing of our new hymnbook. The new hymnal incorporates most of the contents of the old one published in 1911 and has a new part in which the hymns are printed with notes. The new part of the long-awaited hymnbook has old and new Hungarian hymns and introduces some well-known hymns of world Christianity which, however, had not been sung before in our church. The new part of the hymnal also has a prayer section of 100 pages. We have plans for publishing a new Order of Public Worship. The commission to edit this work was given to Károly Pröhle, Jr., Professor of Theology, and our pastors were requested to support him effectively in his work.

Our press publishes the textbooks of religious instruction and the catechism used for confirmation. The book of Senior Zoltán Káldy's entitled *Introduction to the New Testament*, a work designed also for the use of laymen, is under preparation. Technical difficulties of printing have delayed the publishing of Dean Miklós Pálffy's Hebrew Grammar which will be used by Lutheran as well as Reformed and Roman Catholic students of theology.

Church finances. An important concern of our entire church is now the organizing of a Central Church Fund which is to meet the situation arising from the fact that, by

the terms of an Agreement concluded with the state in 1948, the former subsidies of the state to our church will altogether cease in 20 years by a series of reductions of 25 per cent at the end of every fifth year. At present, the financial condition of our church is being widely discussed. The plan is that the Central Church Fund will operate from 1957. The fundamental principle of the plan is that, within the framework of the Central Church Fund, the economically stronger parishes will support the weaker ones. In the course of a gradual transition our church will become entirely self-supporting.

The Hungarian Lutheran Church too suffered much on account of World War II and incurred great material losses. We had to repair and reconstruct 227 church buildings, 48 parish halls and 140 personages. The main asset in completing this work was, of course, the liberality of our church members, but significant financial help was also given by the World Council of Churches and by the Hungarian state. God was gracious in leading our church through the trials of the war and post-war reconstruction, and now these years and events belong to the past.

IV

This short introduction to the life of the Evangelical Church in Hungary is, of course, incomplete and fragmentary. Those interested in the past and present life of our church may be referred to the book by Dr. Lajos Vetó, *Vom Aufbau der Kirche in Ungarn* [The building up of the church in Hungary] (Berlin: Union Verlag; Hamburg-Volksdorf: Evangelischer Verlag, 1955). In his preface to the book Dr. Martin Niemöller gave the following recommendation: "The book by the Lutheran Bishop Dr. Vetó will build a bridge between the 'East' and the 'West' by offering, from the standpoint of a Hungarian churchman, an almost dispassionate account based on documents and contemporary reports of the events in the life of the Hungarian Lutheran Church, particularly during the last ten years. I can only advise all to lay aside, while reading the book, all prejudices and biased curiosity ... It would be no small thing if the reading of this book were to upset our critical bent; it would be still better if we could learn self-criticism from it; and the best result would be if the study of this

book were to move us to recognize and meet the Evangelical Christians of Hungary as our brethren."

We face the future with faith and hope. We believe that God will continue his saving work in Hungary and in our church. He will continue to give to his church children and adults who will believe our preaching and to whom we shall further give the church's true treasure, the most sacred Gospel of God's mercy and glory. As far as we may perceive his plans, we may say that there will be a church here in the coming generations also, and when we leave the land of the living, those coming after us will be members of our church. "*Latet ecclesia, latent sancti*" [the church is hidden, the saints are hidden], yet we proclaim that there was, is and will be a holy people of God on this earth. According to Luther, the work of the Holy Spirit is threefold: he calls into being the church, forgives sins and raises the dead. He still continues to do this work in our present time.

The church is the work of God the Holy Spirit who also performs the work of its renewal. He is eternal, and that is the divine foundation of Article VII of the Confessio Augustana: we believe "*quod una sancta ecclesia perpetua mansura sit*" [that one holy church will remain for ever]. The Holy Spirit will also in time to come renew his church.

Károly Hafenscher

India

New Conversations between the CSI and the Lutheran Churches in South India

Reports and Documents

The Joint Theological Commission of the CSI and the Lutheran churches in South India, which last year worked out a doctrinal statement on the Lord's Supper (see LUTHERAN WORLD II/I, p 74 ff.)* turned

* The speeches and documents of last year's meeting of the Joint Theological Commission of the CSI and the Lutherans (Bangalore 1955) have now appeared in print under the title "The Sacraments" (price Rs. 1.4.0., obtainable from The Christian Literature Society, P. O. Box 501, Park Town, Madras 3, India).

this year in its discussions at Bangalore, April 18 and 19, to the question of the nature of the church. In contrast to previous sessions, it proved this time to be impossible to arrive at a common statement. The following report is meant to be not so much an evaluation as an orientation, since some time will pass before the official transcription of the sessions will appear. Both of the documents here appended, which are being published with the consent of those who drew them up, help to give a better understanding of the special situation which prevailed during the conversations this year.

The theological discussion

The difference between the two sides in the discussion emerged clearly at two points.

1. *The unity of the church.* The Lutherans had declared that "the unity and the continuity of the church depend upon the church's adhering faithfully to the Gospel of Christ and its sacraments." The CSI on the other hand wanted to see the character of the church as an ordered fellowship incorporated as one of the constituent factors of the unity of the church. Bishop Lesslie Newbigin of the CSI declared that the Lutherans had a spiritualizing concept of the church; they treated Word and sacrament as something abstract, divorced from the actual life of the church, intellectual consent to doctrinal formulations being substituted for a common life in faith and love. For the CSI there could be no church unity without actual living together.

2. *The continuity of the church.* Whereas the Lutherans in this point too wished to proceed exclusively from Word and sacrament, the CSI desired to bring into the continuity of the church also the question of order. In this way the whole question of the ministry was made the center of debate. The Lutherans had made it clear that they also consider the ministry, as an institution of Christ, as belonging intimately together with the means of grace, but that concerning the forms of the ministry, decisions can be made as the case may arise under the aspect of practical utility. On the other hand the CSI defended the "historic episcopate" as an essential element in the stability and continuity of the church. In the course of discussion,

however, the representatives of the CSI admitted that the forms of the ministry were not directly prescribed in the New Testament, that they could change in the course of history, and that the historic episcopate as such was not necessary to salvation. The CSI presented its standpoint in a statement of its own (see below) which could not however bridge over the prevailing differences of opinion.

The whole discussion proved that the CSI had been more able previously in the discussion of other questions of doctrine and theology to make concessions, whereas in the area of church order it is much more strongly bound and restricted by its whole history. Bishop Newbigin, the leader of the negotiations, found no one to contradict him when he expressed the opinion that the discussion this time had been "relatively fruitless".

Steps toward church fellowship

Each year since 1953 the Commission had repeated a series of proposals worked out by the CSI which on the basis of theological agreement already reached were to bring the participating churches closer together in a more practical way. Though these proposals have not yet been actually made a reality, nevertheless certain steps forward could be noted: the Synod of the CSI had officially accepted the recommendations and declared itself ready to negotiate with a view to union; this union was not to be understood merely as an absorption of the Lutherans by the CSI. The Federation of the Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Indian had recommended to its member churches a careful study of these recommendations as well as of the joint doctrinal statements formulated to date, and requested opinions from the churches. The mission of the Missouri Synod presented its position in a special statement (see below). Now and then there have been joint local and regional conferences for pastors of the CSI and the Lutheran churches. A special case is that of the Arcot Lutheran Church, which has grown out of the Danish mission work. It has already negotiated with the CSI concerning steps toward pulpit and altar fellowship without however final agreements having been reached.

The opinions in Bangalore were not less divergent in regard to further practical steps to be taken than concerning the theological questions. True, there was agree-

ment that everything should be done to present the work of the Commission to the congregations, for example through translation of the doctrinal statements into the languages of South India. But on the part of the CSI the dominant impression was that theological conversations as they have been carried on to date should not be continued, "Unless we act on that which God has already shown us, he will show us nothing further" (Newbigin). The secretary of the CSI Synod, the only non-theologian among the participants, even protested emphatically against the Indian churches' coming under the domination of Western theology, which he felt could be seen as a result of the doctrinal discussions held so far. On the other hand, however, it was precisely the Indians on the Lutheran side who felt it necessary to warn against precipitate action without sufficient theological clarification.

There was final agreement to ask the participating churches to convene a joint four or five day theological conference in each one of the four chief South Indian languages, that is, from now on, on a regional basis, no longer centralized, and above all, no longer in English. The following were suggested as themes: Law and Gospel, The Lord's Supper, The Unity and Continuity of the Church (including the ministry). The results of these conferences are later to be brought before the Joint Theological Commission, which for the time being will not be meeting. The previous proposals for the practical growing together of the churches were again urgently recommended. The suggestion of the Lutheran group to attempt to work out a common catechism found very little response on the part of the CSI — such an important task had better be postponed till after the completion of a union, it was pointed out. All the same, three neighboring theological seminaries, two of the CSI and one of the Missouri Synod, were given the task of preparing certain studies on the subject.

It is clear that with this year's meeting of the Theological Commission a decisive phase has come to a close in the conversations between the CSI and the Lutheran churches. One could be tempted to speak of a deadlock. The CSI continues to have its doubts whether the Lutherans are at all serious about the desire to come together and whether they are not, as one

of the CSI spokesmen hinted, using theological discussion as a mere pretext for letting things remain as they are. The Lutherans too have their doubts whether the CSI really desires unity on the basis of Word and sacrament, and whether it does not really seek union at any price. Nevertheless, there perhaps exists no reason for exaggerated pessimism. In such conversations it is impossible to prevent the development of such crises—including crises involving mistrust—and to prevent the disappointment of expectations that have been raised too high. But it should not be forgotten how far the participating churches have come in drawing together during the course of the previous doctrinal conversations. If the future serves to allow the partial consensus reached to date to extend its effect into the congregations, then the time of waiting and of apparent lack of progress will not be without fruit.

A Statement on the Ministry (CSI)

“1. The CSI accepted the historic episcopate as the gift of one of the uniting Churches, offered as its contribution to the life of the united Church. Along with that offer went the acceptance by all the uniting Churches of what each had to offer, as is expressed by the words in the Basis of Union: ‘In His spirit of love, all the ministers of the uniting Churches will from the inauguration of the union be recognized as equally ministers of the united Church without distinction or difference’ (p. 69).

2. The historic episcopate is retained in the CSI because it has proved itself to be of great value for the enrichment of the life of the Church.

3. Neither its original acceptance nor its retention depends upon the acceptance of any doctrine of Apostolic Succession, in the sense that one particular form of the ministry is the sole and essential channel for the transmission of the grace needed for the exercise of the ministry in the Church of God.

4. The Constitution states: ‘In making this provision for episcopal ordination and consecration, the Church of South India declares that it is its intention and determination in this manner to secure the unification of its ministry, but that this does not involve any judgment upon the validity or regularity of any other form of the ministry, and the fact that other churches

do not follow the rule of episcopal ordination will not in itself preclude it from holding relations of communion and fellowship with them’ (II, 12). The seriousness with which the CSI regards this provision is shown by the fact that it has among its ministers a considerable number of those who have not received episcopal ordination; that it has received a number of ministers from non-episcopal Churches into its ministry without any reordination; that this has been done not only for ministers from the parent Churches but for those from other non-episcopal Churches with which it enjoys fellowship; and that it has, though pressed by the Anglican Churches to reconsider its relation to non-episcopal parent Churches, refused firmly to do so.

5. In any future union it would certainly be the policy of the CSI to follow the same line of acceptance of all ministers of the uniting Churches as ‘equally and without distinction or difference ministers of the united Church’ without any suggestion of reordination and to maintain the same full communion and fellowship with all the parent Churches however organized.

6. Yet, in any wider union, the CSI would wish that it, no less than the other uniting Churches, should be able to bring into the life of the united Church all the riches of its own life and inheritance. This would include its ministry through which it finds itself linked with the Churches of the past centuries to which it is historically joined in a rich continuity.

7. ‘No Scheme of Union can succeed unless it is plain that what is aimed at is a genuine continuance, within the wider fellowship, of the whole inheritance of the separate ministries mutually enriched, and not the extinction of non-episcopal ministries in order that they may be replaced by an episcopal ministry which itself remains essentially what it was before’ (Report of the Theological Commission, Synod Minutes 1954, p. 147). This would be no less applicable if the ministry which it were desired to extinguish were the episcopal one which we in the CSI now enjoy and value.

8. To abandon this would involve the surrender of one of the aims of its present unity, as expressed in the Constitution: ‘The Church of South India desires to be permanently in full communion and fellowship with all the Churches with which its

constituent groups have had such communion and fellowship' (II, 14).

9. Wider union would result not in a new Church but in a less inadequate manifestation of the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, which is Christ's body, and we believe that the form of the ministry should reflect this.

10. We do not believe that Christ's presence can be guaranteed by any corporate continuity but we do believe that corporate continuity is the proper fruit of Christ's presence.

11. In answer to the questions above we have felt bound to indicate the reasons which make it seem to us most unlikely that we shall be led to abandon the historic episcopate. Certainly in entering into negotiations for wider union the CSI would not refuse to discuss with the utmost frankness and to listen to all that the other Churches might desire to say about the theology of the ministry as well as about its practical organization, and this would obviously include the fullest discussion of episcopacy. We dare not lay down beforehand where the Holy Spirit will guide us to go and we must be ready and willing to follow where He leads. But in the light of our experience we earnestly commend to our Lutheran brethren the gift which we have received and which we have come increasingly to value."

A Statement of the Position of the Mission of the Missouri Synod on Questions of Fellowship

"First of all, we do sincerely and fervently thank God for the guidance of His Spirit in all these deliberations. We have been deeply grateful to the other brethren who have deepened our understanding of Scriptural truths, we have been impressed by the measure of theological agreement that has come forth from these meetings, and, above all, in the willingness to submit to the World and Spirit of God, we recognize a future that promises unity among Christians which we have not yet beheld in our day.

Secondly, we find ourselves in a position where we could not agree wholeheartedly to the suggestions for pulpit and altar fellowship made in the last meeting. We have not yet come to the conviction that the measure of agreement achieved in the discussions and represented by the various agreed statements can justify this step on our part.

Thirdly, the polity of our church is such that any action toward closer fellowship can be taken only with the knowledge and consent of the congregations.

Fourthly, we fear that dissociating ourselves from these conversations and other relations with Christian brethren would seriously hinder any future ecumenical efforts on our part.

Although it is impossible for us to take action that might well be possible for other bodies, we pledge ourselves to look for the guidance of God through His Word and His Spirit and to follow the guidance that He gives us. To this end, we have deeply appreciated the help of the other brethren in the past and seek it in the future.

Suggestions for Implementation. In view of the fact that other important doctrines of the Bible need to be studied and discussed we suggest that the joint theological discussions be continued and that some of the doctrines for study and discussion be the following: Man and Sin, The Person and Work of Christ, Conversion, Justification, Sanctification, The Last Things.

In addition to the above, the conversations held thus far have effected an improvement over the status of years gone by. But these conversations are still very much by a few people; we are faced with the problem of making them live for the congregations that we represent.

We therefore feel that we should make concerted efforts to hold meetings on the local levels among the pastors and other representatives of the respective congregations where they find themselves in geographical proximity. Some of this has been done in the past: seminaries in South Travancore and Tinnevely have held annual meetings; a group of religious leaders have had monthly meetings in Trivandrum with open discussion. But if the respective Lutheran and CSI theological commissions would urge such conferences with a view to gaining a greater sense of unity, this could act as the groundwork for further negotiations in regard to fellowship.

We feel that these local conversations will result in a deeper appreciation of our existing unity in Christ as well as in a fuller agreement in matters of doctrine. As the various local groups study and grow together, they should be asked to present their findings and submit them as carefully explored areas of agreement."

H. W. Gensichen

CORRESPONDENCE

With this issue LUTHERAN WORLD introduces a new feature entitled "Correspondence". We should appreciate receiving comments on the work of the Lutheran World Federation and the ecumenical movement, and on the articles and reports in LUTHERAN WORLD. The Editor of course will use his discretion in choosing the letters to be printed, but no letter will be excluded because it expresses an opinion contrary to those maintained in the magazine; in fact, we should like to encourage all those who do have questions or contrary views to present them in the columns of LUTHERAN WORLD, so that it may truly be a forum for world-wide Lutheran opinion. Letters should be kept as concise as possible and should be addressed to:

The Editor
LUTHERAN WORLD
The Lutheran World Federation,
17 route de Malagnou
Geneva, Switzerland.

On the Question of the Holiness of the Church

Sir: I have read with great interest the article by Gunnar Hilderdal on the "Holiness of the Church" [LUTHERAN WORLD III/1, June, 1956 pp. 34-43.] In doing so I was especially glad to see that in my own Old Testament work I had come essentially to the same conclusions as the writer of this article.

Since in the New Testament the church is portrayed as the new people of God which thereupon enters into the position of the previous people of God, Israel, one must first of all see what the holiness of God's people means in the Old Testament and how it comes about. Holiness in the Old Testament is not a moral quality and not something which man achieves. What is holy is the nature of God and whatever is brought about directly by his presence. The view of history of the Old Testament always starts from the fact that the tribes

of Israel can show no particular qualifications or merits whatsoever to justify their election; their election is rather the expression of the boundless, sovereign grace of God. The people of God does not come into being by God's seeking out for himself a group of blameless men who fulfill a certain ideal of innocence, but by God's creating a people out of nothing, saving it from death and destruction, working in its midst, educating it and guiding its history; God does not come where there are holy men, but his coming brings holiness and sanctification. The meaning of worship in the Old Testament was the realization of the presence of God and the continual renewal of the covenant which God had made with the people. Thus worship upheld in the consciousness of the people, just as the prophetic preaching did, the fact of holiness with its obligations. At the same time the ceremonial cleansings ever anew imparted this holiness to the people.

Mutatis mutandis, these points of view are also valid for the new people of God. The church too originates in the incomprehensible love of God by means of an unmerited election. Christian holiness too is not in the first place moral perfection, but the presence of God realized in the proclamation of the Gospel and in participation in the sacraments. Vilmos Vajta has pointed out that the third article of the Apostles' creed evidently juxtaposes deliberately holiness and the forgiveness of sins. The two belong closely together. As the ancient people of God participated in holiness through ritual cleansing, so this holiness is imparted to the new people of God through the cleansing of the forgiveness of sins, effected by God. The members of the church do not by any means have this holiness as a permanent possession. It is only where Christ takes away sins in forgiveness that the Christian possesses holiness. But even this moment is threatened by unholy, sinful impulses of the soul. By this contradictory simultaneity of sin and holiness the Christian is continually in a state of crisis, he is ever subject to judgment and grace, he experiences pain and joy in constant regeneration.

Thus the basis of the holiness of the church lies in God's promise. Hillerdal says very pertinently that this holiness is no empirical phenomenon but an article of faith. This sentence is of course comprehensible only from the standpoint of the New Testament doctrine of the aeons. According to the state of exegesis in his time Luther could have known nothing of this doctrine, and yet he intuitively found the right conclusion in perceiving that the holiness of the church, like that of the Christians, is still hidden in this world. Until the return of Christ the church possesses no visible holiness of her own; she is holy only in that through the proclamation of the Word and the administration of the sacraments the Holy Spirit effects in her the forgiveness of sins.

The practical significance of this is that the work of the church does not aim at a human moral ideal, but that her real task lies in offering the Gospel of the forgiveness of sins, for this alone is true holiness, and without this holiness no one would see God.

*Professor Aarre Lauha
Helsinki, Finland*

Principal Problems of Scandinavian theology

Sir: When one reads the compressed article on the "Principal Systematic Problems of Present-Day Scandinavian Theology" by Leiv Aalen [LUTHERAN WORLD III/1, June 1956, pp. 44-58], in amazement one thinks of that word [of Schiller's] "Wer

zählt die Völker, nennt die Namen?" [Who numbers the nations, knows their names?] The carefully selected bibliography, limited as it is to what is essential, can also satisfy the interested reader. Nevertheless, when one puts the question as to what the principal problems of present-day Scandinavian theology are, one does not receive a true impression.

Are "Nygren, Bultmann, Barth" or the question of method posed in connection with these great names, really supposed to be the chief problem of Swedish and Danish theology?

In my opinion, a presentation of present-day Scandinavian theology must recognize "the question of the church" as the point of departure and goal — as the central problem in Scandinavian theology today. (Aalen gives an intimation of this on p. 55.) All other problems are detail questions of this one problem, and would have to be presented as such. Then the accent of the presentation would not be on the "tendencies", but on the "problems", while, on the contrary, such a significant "tendency" as that of the high church movement could not then be so overlooked, as has happened in Aalen's presentation.

One would also probably have to ask the author whether the work of Söderblom and Einar Billing was most effectively carried on in the "theology of Uppsala", or rather whether this is not precisely the case in present-day "Lundensian theology". (cf. p. 48).

Despite these questions one can be happy about the article because it witnesses to the vitality of present-day Scandinavian theology.

*Knut W. Backe
Lund, Sweden*

BOOK REVIEWS

Literature on Luther in English

FAITH ACTIVE IN LOVE. *An Investigation of the Principles underlying Luther's Social Ethics.* By George Wolfgang Forell. New York: The American Press, 1954.

CHURCH AND STATE IN LUTHER AND CALVIN. By William A. Mueller. Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1954.

FROM LUTHER TO KIERKEGAARD. *A Study in the History of Theology.* By Jaroslav Pelikan. Saint Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 1950.

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS. By Herman A. Preus. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Publishing House, 1948.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD. *Luther Studies.* By Gordon Rupp. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1953.

Literature on Luther in English is still very limited in extent and plays a subordinate role in relation to German and Scandinavian literature. Until a few decades ago there was a general lack of basic works which could have presented Luther's theology in a relevant and reliable way for readers primarily in England and the United States. Because such basic literature just did not exist, grotesque characterizations of Luther could be presented and promulgated here and there. For example in America the historian McGovern, in his book with the biased title *From Luther to Hitler* (Boston: 1941), characterized the Reformer and the heritage of the Lutheran Reformation in a very crude manner. An absolute low point in the interpretation of Luther was reached, however, with the appearance in England of the political propaganda pamphlet by Peter F. Wiener, entitled *Martin Luther, Hitler's Spiritual Ancestor* (London: 1945).

But during the last decade much has changed. In England, as well as in America, a whole series of works on Luther has been published. It is to be regretted that among them there are still some of very doubtful value. A critic like Gordon Rupp who knows his field has made the comprehensive judgment about these works that their number is "in proportion to the modern spate of volumes about everybody

and everything" but that "it may be said that from them all, however bad, there is always something profitable to be learned." In relation to American Luther research, Rupp expresses the judgment that it is "noticeably weak on the theological side" (*The Righteousness of God*, p. 52). Although we have been living now for some decades in the age of the ecumenical movement which demands mutual knowledge and mutual understanding, there still reigns in the Anglican sphere a considerable lack knowledge concerning Luther's theology, and one finds many a misinterpretation of it. It is therefore a happy sign that in one of the last issues of *The Anglican Theological Review* Howard E. Kunkle points up "Some Anglican Misunderstandings of Lutheran Theology" (1955, pp. 244-259). It must be seen as somewhat regrettable that American Lutheranism, which has been able to expand and strengthen its position not only in its own land but also in the international sphere and in the ecumenical movement, should be hindered to a large extent from earnestly concerning itself with Luther and Lutheran theology by reason of language difficulties. But also in this point one may now hope for an essential change. The large-scale edition of Luther's most important writings, which has just begun to appear (*Luther's Works*, American edition; Vol. XII, edited by J. Pelikan, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955) in the future will make the theology of the German Reformer accessible to a much larger circle of American Lutherans. A favorable sign is also the fact that Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, has planned the opening of a Luther Institute this year in cooperation with American and European Luther scholars.

In recent years, however, both in England and in America, works on Luther have appeared which raise the average level above that described by Gordon Rupp. In Great Britain the works of Philip Watson, Professor at Handsworth College in Birmingham (*The State as the Servant of God*, 1946; *Let God be God: An Interpretation of the Theology of Martin Luther*, 1947, in

German, *Um Gottes Gottheit: eine Einführung in Luthers Theologie*, Berlin: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1952) and the works of Gordon Rupp, Professor of Reformation History at Cambridge (*Luther's Progress to the Diet of Worms, 1521*, London: 1951, and *The Righteousness of God*, *Luther Studies*, here under review) are to be placed in a special class. Also deserving of recognition is the book by the late Hans Herbert Kramm, who fled to Great Britain before the second world war, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, (London: 1947)*.

Among American presentations of Luther, of which it is very difficult, from a European perspective, to get a picture, should be included in the first place Roland Bainton's biography of Luther *Here I Stand* (New York: 1950; in German, *Hier stehe ich: das Leben Martin Luthers*, Göttingen: Deuerliche Verlagbuchhandlung, 1952) and the work by Ernest G. Schwiebert, of broader scope, but theologically less penetrating, *Luther and His Times* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1951). Of the works published in the 'forties the following may be mentioned: M. Reu's *Luther and the Scriptures* (Columbus, Ohio: Wartburg Press, 1944), Herman A. Preus's *The Communion of Saints. A Study of the Origin and Development of Luther's Doctrine of the Church*, here under review, and Edgar M. Carlson's *The Reinterpretation of Luther*, (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1948). Helpful contributions to the understanding of the Reformer's theology are also J. Dillenberger's *God Hidden and Revealed* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1953) and George W. Forell's *Faith Active in Love. An Investigation of the Principles Underlying Luther's Social Ethics*, also here under review.

The framework of this review does not permit us to consider in greater detail all these works, desirable as that might in itself be. But we shall examine more closely Gordon Rupp's latest work, Herman A. Preus's study on Luther's concept of the church, so important for dogmatics, and George W. Forell's work in social ethics. The other two books which we shall mention briefly seek to determine Luther's

significance from different aspects, namely, Jaroslav Pelikan's theological history, *From Luther to Kierkegaard* and William A. Mueller's *Church and State in Luther and Calvin*.

Gordon Rupp's *The Righteousness of God. Luther Studies* grew out of a series of lectures (the Birkbeck Lectures in Ecclesiastical History) which were delivered at Cambridge in 1947. Nevertheless the author continued to deal with recent literature on Luther up until the year of the publication of the book in 1953. In a preface Rupp points to the special requirements for English-language presentations of Luther. These obviously correct and interesting points are probably not least directed toward those theologians as well who come from a land which has had for many generations independent Luther scholarship of its own. According to Rupp, an essential task of English-language Luther presentations should be to allow Luther himself to speak, though in translation, so that the readers may get used to the sound of his words. Furthermore, it is indispensable for English-speaking readers to be acquainted with the methods and results of German and Scandinavian Luther research. "It must therefore be to an almost regrettable extent a work of vulgarization, descriptive rather than interpretive" (p.ix). Accordingly, Rupp allows Luther himself to speak at some length, and presents in detail results which have been obtained by a number of modern Luther scholars. The first part of his book (pp. 3-77) bears the title "The Historians' Luther". Here the history of Luther research is drawn in broad outline. In his treatment of this theme Rupp shows a sound acquaintance with Scandinavian, especially Swedish, Luther research, to which he refers in numerous footnotes. It is unfortunate that this does not happen to the same degree in relation to German literature on Luther, in which Rupp nevertheless is apparently just as well versed. In this first part of the book, it is especially that section which Rupp has entitled "Luther in England" which deserves particular interest from the point of view of church history and the history of thought.

The second and most extensive part of the book bears the title "Coram Deo" (pp. 81-256). In this section—in a way similar to that in which he treated Luther's *Progress to the Diet of Worms*—Rupp traces

* An article by Hans Herbert Kramm appeared posthumously in the periodical *Luther-Mitteilungen der Lutherergesellschaft*, Berlin: 1955, No. 1, p. 27 ff., with the title "Luthers Wirkung heute in Großbritannien" [The influence of Luther in Great Britain today].

the development of the young Luther in its primary aspects. Special chapters for example deal with the "Dictata super Psalterium" (1513-1515), the lectures on Romans and the lectures on Galatians and Hebrews. The presentation is continued down to Luther's "Rationis Latomianae Confutatio" (1521). Apart from the introductory paragraphs in which the historical and psychological presuppositions for Luther's theological development are discussed, Rupp's method is to present bit by bit what Luther actually said and what he stood for. This is a simple method, which many Luther scholars have used in the past. Rupp nevertheless ascribes this primarily to the Danish theologian Regin Prenter, for which there appears to me to be little reason (cf. pp. 83 and 247: "the sound method of Regin Prenter"). For a study of historical development this method is thoroughly applicable, and though one misses in reading at some points a comprehensive survey, this is partially compensated for by the section entitled "Comment" (cf. pp. 247-256). But this is primarily accomplished in the third part of the book, in which Rupp treats the special themes of the theology of the older Luther. Corresponding to the title "Coram Deo" Rupp sees in the "justitia Dei" the key concept of Luther's approach. One could hardly raise objection to fixing the central point here. Following Erich Vogelsang's work, *Die Anfänge von Luthers Christologie* [The Beginnings of Luther's Christology, 1929], Rupp establishes the date of Luther's breakthrough as 1514. Luther's doctrine of justification is more closely defined by Rupp as "an eschatology of faith", and he emphasizes that the word "faith" is for Luther a thoroughly many-sided concept. It must be seen as "magnetically attracting to itself a rich complex of meanings" (p. 255). In this point one might wish that Rupp had attempted to probe a bit more deeply and to present in systematic form the various functions which the concept of faith had in the theology of the young Luther—not least because it is well known that it is precisely Luther's doctrine of justification by faith alone which is often misunderstood in English-language literature.

In the third part, which has the imaginative title "Luther and . . ." (pp. 259-355), the author presents a series of smaller studies on Luther's understanding of the church, his doctrine of political authority

and his relationship to Erasmus and humanism. None of these studies presses more deeply into the problems involved, but they do present without exception valuable surveys. A more exact analysis would have been desirable in view of statements made in *De servo arbitrio* (1525), since these are misunderstood by many who are not more closely acquainted with Luther's thought.

In contrast to the tendency to systematize Luther's statements in all points and to force them into the strait jacket of generalization, Rupp makes a criticism which he evidently aims at all professional Luther scholars. "Luther did not take himself as seriously as some of his disciples did and do . . . It is perhaps a heresy to say so, but I think Luther sometimes toyed with a phrase, a word or a theological distinction, and then let it fall again when it had served its particular purpose" (p. 255). In a similar way the Erlangen Luther scholar Walther von Loewenich, in the foreword to his book *Luther als Ausleger der Synoptiker* [Luther as Expositor of the Synoptics, 1954], warned against doing violence to the tense riches of Luther's statements by over-systematization.

Herman A. Preus's *The Communion of Saints* is a historical investigation of Luther's doctrine of the church and at the same time a contribution to the current debate on the church. This twofold aim gives rise, however, to many difficulties in regard to method and at times the transition from the presentation of Luther's thought to the relevant reflections on the present-day situation of the church occurs somewhat hastily and abruptly. The introduction entitled "Luther and the Doctrine of the Church in History" (pp. 3-33) is specifically oriented toward church conditions in America. Preus particularly emphasizes the necessity of achieving clarity in regard to the understanding of the church. The second part of the book has the character of a history of development. Under the heading "Luther the Roman Catholic" (pp. 37-72) he portrays in various sections "The Obedient Son", "The Catholic Critic" and "The Rebel". What is however of the greatest interest is the presentation of the theology of the older Luther, "Luther the Reformer", which forms the chief part of the book (pp. 75-172).

In this part Preus proceeds from the concept which he chose as the title of the

book, "the communion of saints". In what follows he takes up among other things the difficult problem of the visible and invisible church. Here Preus defends the thesis that "Luther knew only one Church, the invisible, spiritual Church, which is the Communion of believers" (p. 87). Preus maintains however that this may not be confused with the fact that the church "manifests its presence on earth in assemblies of men where the Word is preached and the Sacraments administered according to the Word of God" (p. 89). It is Preus's intention to point out (as he expresses it in a chapter heading) that according to Luther the church is "the object of our faith". But here I must pose the critical question as to whether in this case it can really be proper to speak of Luther's "spiritualized conception of the Church" (p. 100). In his struggle for a right conception of the church Luther is fighting—as in almost all the important points of his theology—on two fronts: against Rome and against the Enthusiasts. Where the latter form the front, Luther strives—as Preus expressly points out—to emphasize that the church is a present reality, and is both visible and audible. It is probable that these two aspects—the church as the object of faith and at the same time a perceptible reality here on earth—could more easily have been connected with one another if Preus had undertaken a more fundamental analysis of the doctrine of the spiritual Kingdom and its dynamic. Here the idea is of essential significance that God overcomes the heart of man by his unceasing redemptive action and desires to lead him from unbelief to faith, but that this action of God takes place at the same time in a church visible and perceptible in Word and sacrament.

Whereas Preus's book was probably written primarily with the present-day life of the congregation in view, George W. Forell's work *Faith Active in Love*, though it also can be read as a contribution to the present-day theological debate, is concerned primarily to clarify in this point Luther's view of social ethics. In England, as in America, the understanding of Luther's social ethics has for a long time been unhappily dependent upon Ernest Troeltsch. The ethical consequence which Troeltsch drew from Luther's distinction between "person" and "office" was that it led to a

kind of double ethic. It is well known that this interpretation has been violently criticized by more recent Luther research and it can be shown that this view is no longer tenable. In 1931 there appeared a translation of Troeltsch's *Die Soziallehren der christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen* [The Social Doctrines of Christian Churches and Groups], and this is still having its effect in the English-speaking world. Rupp pointed out in his criticism, quite correctly, that here there is "a fertile source of English mis-reading of Luther". Forell is at pains basically and incisively to disprove the thesis of Troeltsch, and undoubtedly he has succeeded very well. Forell demonstrates that "the ethical principle" for Luther is faith active in love (p. 70 ff.). Under the heading "The Practical Principle" (pp. 112–155) Forell treats Luther's doctrine of vocation as well as the significance which "ratio", "lex naturae" and similar concepts have in Luther's theology. If here one may make a critical remark, it would be that Forell here passes over a bit too quickly the involved relationship of the ethical and practical principles. But the question is raised precisely by this series of problems, however, in how far Luther's ethics is based upon the Gospel, the Law, or upon both, and if the latter is the case, what the relationship of the one is to the other.

A valuable contribution to the discussion of Luther's social ethics is, on the other hand, what Forell has stated and demonstrated on the subject of Luther's eschatology under the heading "The Limiting Principle" (pp. 156–185). This reviewer can assent to the thesis that in Luther eschatology—though I would prefer to say instead: certain elements in his philosophy of history, which in a special way affects his understanding of eschatology—leads to a certain conservatism in his view of society which stands in tension to his basic ethical principle, namely the principle that the Christian, wherever he may be, must bring forth the works of love of his neighbor.

Proof that in America also Luther research is in full swing is the fact that even a Baptist has been stimulated to make a thorough study of Luther. William A. Mueller, who produced the work *Church and State in Luther and Calvin*, is Professor at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. By his participation in the Life and

Work Conference in Oxford (1937), he has become known in ecumenical work. In this connection, however, it is primarily his presentation and critique of Luther which interests us. The book indicates that Mueller is well acquainted with the debate concerning Luther's concept of the church (cf. "Luther's Conception of the Church", p. 5 ff.), and concerning his social ethics. He even devotes a whole chapter to the theme "Luther and the Problem of Natural Law" (p. 46 ff.). As a Baptist, Mueller directs his attention primarily to "The Problem of Religious Liberty" (p. 60 ff.). In a "Summary" Mueller gives a generally positive evaluation of Luther's understanding of the church and his doctrine of the state. As a criticism he mentions that "Luther failed to realize his high ideal of the church in actual practice" and "by leaving the great problems of national life, that is, matters of state, economics, arts and sciences to their own devices, Lutheran ethics tended to become quietistic and therefore ineffective in the stream of life" (pp. 67, 69). Mueller is particularly critical, naturally enough, of those tendencies in Luther's theology which prepared the way for a development in the direction of the folk church system. In this way, Mueller's own theological standpoint naturally becomes apparent in his critical evaluation of Luther. However, his work is a valuable contribution to the total picture of English-language literature on Luther.

Whereas in Mueller's presentation the cause and nature of the influence of Luther on later historical development is the object of a more general discussion, Jaroslav Pelikan, formerly Professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and now Professor at the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago, follows this influence step by step for the period indicated by the title of the book, *From Luther to Kierkegaard*. The first chapter is devoted to an analysis of the theology and philosophy of Luther (pp. 1-23). The other chapters treat: "Melancthon and the Confessional Generation" (pp. 24-48), "The Age of Orthodoxy" (pp. 49-75), "Rationalism" (pp. 76-96) and "The Nineteenth Century" (pp. 97-120). Naturally, within the framework of such a comprehensive presentation, no specialized questions could be handled and no individual investigations carried out. Surprising and somewhat audacious seems to me the statement that

"Luther's sympathy for Plato"—in comparison to his underestimation of Aristotle—"can be explained in terms of the Platonistic revival", or more precisely, by "the circle of influence of Florentine Platonism" (p. 8 f.). Can one speak at all of Luther's sympathy for Plato without conjuring up distorted or even false conceptions? Despite the objective treatment of the material which determines the presentation given by Pelikan this critical remark appears to me to be important. And Pelikan's statement must also be considered an over-generalization when he says of Luther that "the problem of natural theology became prominent in his thinking . . . especially during the last fifteen or twenty years of his life" (p. 22). An important idea in the subsequent presentation of the history of theology is the thesis that essential theological elements which are to be found in Luther break forth again in the writings of Kierkegaard.

Luther research, as already mentioned at the beginning, had been till now the special domain of Germany and Scandinavia. English-language theology has some leeway to make up. But all the signs point to the fact that it has energetically set out and has already covered a good part of the way.

Gunnar Hillerdal

Luther in English Translation

LETTERS OF SPIRITUAL COUNSEL. By Martin Luther. Edited and translated by Theodore G. Tappert. Philadelphia: The Library of Christian Classics XVIII, 1955.

LUTHER. By Rudolf Thiel. Translated by G. K. Wiencke, Philadelphia: 1955.

Familiar words in another language regain a lost immediacy. Therefore it is a joy even for the German reader to steep himself in Tappert's selection of Luther's letters, particularly since here it is a matter of really choice examples of spiritual counsel, which are not a mere by-product, but the full expression of a life work and which are fittingly understood by the editor and translator to be in themselves pastoral care. The letters therefore not only are a part of, but may really be considered the epitome of Luther's theology

just as, according to the Smalcald Articles the "*mutuum colloquium et consolatio fratrum* [mutual conversation and consolation of brethren] is a preaching of the Gospel.

The arrangement of the letters according to subject facilitates getting a general view and makes it easy to use them. Consolation for the sick, those in affliction, the bereaved, exhortation to prisoners and those under persecution, intercession for the oppressed, counsel in all forms of inner and external need, care for the servants of the Word and admonition to those who rule—the wealth of what has been here collected from the volumes of letters and Table Talks, already indicated just in the heading, becomes even more abundant as one comes to examine the diversity of men each of whom wished to be addressed in his particular situation and toward whom even the most hurried letters show an amazing openness.

The selection reveals a fine acquaintance with the inexhaustible volumes of letters and a sure judgment of what is accessible to modern readers. Even lesser-known writings are represented, such as the proposal, certainly worthy of every consideration, that the abandoned Franciscan monastery in Wittenberg, an old burial place of Saxon princes, should be handed over to Christ as an asylum for his poor members, so that in them he himself might be served. (p. 324).

The translation is careful and concerned to achieve a definite understanding. That necessitates at times modernization and simplification, to which then an expression which is limited by its period, but no doubt also characteristic, has to be sacrificed. The English Luther addresses himself not to a "*venerabilis vir*" but instead "to the esteemed gentleman" (p. 29). The "*höhere Wiege*" [higher cradle, i.e. more exalted birth] which does not allow the elector to humble himself to inflict punishment becomes "a lofty position" (p. 321); the sentence: "Ich hab mich aber lassen ansehen EKFG Schrift, als hätte meine Schrift EKFG ein wenig bewegt" [I allowed myself to view your electoral grace's letter as though my letter had moved your electoral grace a little] (i.e. "I have gained the impression") becomes "I take the liberty of supposing".

Here and there one's judgment on factual matters will be different. For example, the part played by the Zwickau prophets in the Wittenberg disturbances seems to me to be over-estimated (p. 139). And Luther's appeal, growing out of a strong faith, warning against a defensive alliance to resist the Emperor's despotic measures, cannot really with justice be characterized as being "more optimistic than realistic" (p. 327).

On the whole the book makes accessible to American readers—and not only to them—an aspect of Luther with which as yet they will hardly have been acquainted, and may it be that—above and beyond any "historical" consideration—they will feel themselves addressed in their own encounter with a spiritual counselor who speaks with a Christian authority scarcely found in another.

If Westminster Press deserves real credit for the publication of Tappert's fine selection of Luther's letters, and if it is no less a cause for gratitude that Muhlenberg Press makes accessible to American readers a scholarly and yet readable book such as Heinrich Böhmer's presentation of the young Luther, or a representation taking modern questions as a starting point, such as that of Hanns Lilje, I cannot give the same praise to its acceptance of Rudolf Thiel's Book on Luther.

The translation is admittedly good; one will hardly blame it if it fails to catch the fine double meaning of Luther's answer to the threatening question of a member of the Roman curia as to where he would stay, rendering the "*sub caelo*" (meaning both, "in the open air" and "under God's Heaven") by "out under the sky" (p. 27). It transmits the words of Thiel himself without alteration, one might almost like to say unfortunately!

For what this author has written with a journalistic art that is certainly to be admired, with a surprising knowledge of Luther's writings and with an evident personal interest in his hero, can, it is true, arrest the attention of many readers and hold them spellbound with his problems; indeed it makes more widely known some profound sayings of Luther. But one does not confront Luther himself here.

The 95 Theses and with them the beginning of the Reformation are not understood, nor is the significance of Worms

recognized, nor has Luther's distinction between Law and Gospel even been grasped.

Thiel attempts a psychological explanation where only a theological one is possible (p. 398: "his faith was so difficult it demanded all of a man, so that any deed, even love, took second place"), or he undertakes a "human" classification (p. 392: "Here we can see that the deepest basis of a doctrine or a reformation lies in the character of the man"). I Cor. 13: 13 is reported to have elicited from Luther the open avowal that love—ultimately "the subtlest egoism"—is the purest Christianity, but can be realized only in heaven (p. 398).

The preface of 1952, like that of the first edition, strikes obstinately to the "great" discovery of Luther's lack of assurance of salvation. The Reformer would be by no means in agreement if he were to see his service of the Word evaluated in the words of the Goethe quotation as "fragments of a great confession"! If Tappert rightly sees in Luther a spiritual counselor, Thiel assures us that in his hero we shall find nothing of the "parson", but on the contrary "an ever-struggling man".

It is a "highly original", if one will, but in any case a total distortion of the reformer which is here offered, as earlier to German readers, so now to American ones as well, who have in Heinrich Böhmert's *Road to Reformation* and Roland Bainton's *Here I Stand* much more reliable guides.

Hermann Dörries

General Presentations of Luther

DER KATHOLISCHE LUTHER [*Luther the Catholic*] By Karl August Meissinger, Munich: L. Lehnen-Verlag, and Berne: Francke-Verlag, 1952.

LUTHER — DIE DEUTSCHE TRAGÖDIE 1521 [*Luther — The German Tragedy 1521*] By Erich Seeberg. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer-Verlag, 1953.

LUTHERS THEOLOGIE IN IHREN GRUNDZÜGEN [*Luther's Theology in Outline*] By Erich Seeberg. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer-Verlag, 2nd. ed., 1950.

The posthumously published books on Luther by the learned but independent Karl

August Meissinger (d. 1950) which are written in a precise and fascinating style, consciously depart from those paths usually taken by Protestant Luther scholars. Meissinger pursued research on Luther not in order to corroborate the full justification of the Reformation perspective over against the Catholic one, but as one who, for all his love for Luther and all his positive evaluation of his fundamental religious and theological interests, nevertheless suffered bitterly under the church's division conjured up by Luther *nolens volens* and regarded it as utterly tragic, since it was not at all in line with Luther's original motives but resulted from the deflection of these motives and of their unfortunate involvement in all sorts of circumstances conditioned by the times. These, however, should not have had any perpetuating effects but it should have been possible to overcome them. Therefore it is a matter of clearing away this rubble and winning back in its original purity that which Luther actually desired, which contains in itself no necessity at all for the division of the church.

"The state of the German church and the whole state of the western church in general, no matter how bad it might have been, was nevertheless better before the split than afterwards. The diseased organism still left room for good hope of a cure, indeed no one considered the disease hopeless, and no one could have had cause to think it so. It was the split which created a desperate situation for centuries." (*Der katholische Luther*, p. 287) "The situation became dangerous only after the split in the church and because of it. Only since western man has had in principle, or has seemed to have, the choice between several 'truths' have all the forces of disintegration become really powerful. It is only when an organism is extensively weakened in itself and no longer produces its natural anti-bodies that pernicious influences from outside gain entry." (*Die deutsche Tragödie*, p. 108.)

In pursuit of his object Meissinger attempted, with complete impartiality ("Four hundred years of confessional conflict have distorted the judgment of man, even of the historian"—*Die Deutsche Tragödie*, p. 117) and by bringing into play every scholarly

precision and the gift of a convincing manner of presentation, to draw an unbiased picture of the real Luther and of the true circumstances of the Reformation, which stands in contrast both to the biased and distorted picture of Luther in Catholic presentations up to the present ("Boldpioneers of the future such as A. Herte and J. Lortz are here to be excepted—*Der katholische Luther*, p. 92) and to the biased glorifications of Luther by an all too victorious Protestantism ("If one must defend Luther today, one must defend him against liberalism"—*Die deutsche Tragödie*, p. 71).

Meissinger hopes in his presentation "to reach just as much the broad section of educated Catholics . . . as those intelligent Protestants who are stirred by the Third Article's challenge to their conscience" (*Der katholische Luther*, p. 92 f.), and thus "transcend the deadlock in the discussion of determinative events of modern history" (*Die deutsche Tragödie*, p. 71).

Meissinger had hopes of writing as his life-work a great biography of Luther, to consist of three parts: I "Luther the Catholic", that is, Luther before he became the Reformer, until about 1518, the Luther who remained with his "new theology" within the bounds and possibilities of the Catholic church: II. "Luther the Reformer", who through a kind of "heterogony of aims" became, or rather had to become a public anti-papal zealot, in consequence of which through perverse action and reaction there came about the split in the church: III. "Luther the Lutheran", that is, the Luther who against his will became "confessional", whose "new theology" instead of being a ferment within the comprehensive church (*Die deutsche Tragödie*, p. 109) led, compelled by necessity, to the establishment of a separate church which could not come to terms with itself but rather had to let the approaches which were good in their place cause their own disintegration (cf. *Die deutsche Tragödie*, pp. 122–139). This complete work which was planned remained unfinished. After the death of the author it was possible to publish only its first part, "*Luther the Catholic*" as well as the brilliantly written and clever sketch entitled "*Luther, The German Tragedy, 1521*" which in contrast to the abundance of penetrating notes of the former book, explores in a concise and pointed presentation, without any learned padding, in

both forward and backward directions beyond what is treated there, by setting the Reformation in the context of the great historical trends which long led up to it, and by bringing into clear outline "Luther the Reformer" as Meissinger saw him. The presentation closes with the year 1521, when "the German tragedy" becomes irrevocably manifest.

Meissinger's whole devotion and penetrating interest was directed to the pre-Reformation Luther. From the time when, starting out from Erasmus research, he was concerned, as a pupil of Johannes Ficker, in the investigation of the manuscripts of Luther's early lectures and their background in the history of theology, Meissinger, who had the same time poetic gifts and inclinations, unflaggingly pursued his detailed research for decades with philological and historical precision, in order to create as exactly as possible the authentic background for an objective perception of what was theologically distinctive in the young Luther. Here one can learn a very great deal from Meissinger in regard to the necessary historical and methodological preliminary studies for the investigation of the "new theology" of the pre-Reformation Luther, its development and its significance. His introductions, methods and individual conclusions in this respect belong in my opinion to what is most valuable in his "*Luther the Catholic*", while at the same time it is true that a disturbing effect is produced by the depreciatory way in which everything that does not agree with the school of Ficker is more or less cast aside.

And yet Meissinger is not able to do justice to the theological content of Luther's early lectures and its fundamental meaning and significance. His interpretations in this respect are simply inadequate, and do not even come close to recognizing as much as even modern Catholic scholars have done. The "new theology" of the young Luther up to his commentary on Galatians of 1519 is according to Meissinger's presentation not really anything new which went fundamentally beyond the framework of the possibilities that appeared at that time and earlier in the area of Catholicism ("Luther produced after all astonishingly little that was new", *Die deutsche Tragödie*, p. 108); basically it was merely the resolute and consistent

application of the scientific methods of humanism (*Die deutsche Tragödie*, p. 54 ff., 130ff.) or of the "spirit of the Renaissance" (pp. 55, 107) to theology and biblical exegesis, filled with religious motives of German and Bernardine mysticism and of the *devotio moderna*, and the whole did not go essentially beyond the rediscovered theology of Augustine.

"The doctrine which Luther proclaimed from his professorial chair and from the pulpit from 1513 [until 1518] contained in regard to the later scholastic *communis opinio* new insights which originated partly in the humanistic, partly in the mystical tendencies of the time, both of which had passed through a highly original temperament.—Many of the humanists and mystics of that time, who were following the same paths as Luther, never came into conflict with the church. And not even Luther's own opinion, going beyond that of Augustine, that the *concupiscentia* of original sin was in itself already sin, involved intolerable inferences, in spite of Denifle, who is of the opinion that here, from the time of the lecture on Romans, the beginning of Luther's falling away from the church's doctrine can be established.—Luther stood in the living stream of development of the proclamation of Christian doctrine, which is ever again being renewed and must be renewed of itself. The whole history of the church consists in such processes of renewal" (*Die deutsche Tragödie*, p. 72). "The real Luther is and remains astonishingly 'Catholic' (p. 108), "with him it is a matter not of original experiences but of educational experiences" (p. 68).

The "new theology" of the pre-Reformation Luther was entirely a possibility within Catholicism. No compelling grounds for a schism resulted from it as such; the reproach of heresy which was soon voiced against it, was by no means justified (*Der katholische Luther*, p. 117 f.). That despite this fact the split in the church occurred is, according to Meissinger, a "tragedy" in the full sense of this non-Christian word ("It is a secular concept; a pagan one . . . Perhaps it is precisely for this reason appropriate to give us a secure standpoint apart from any party." *Die deutsche Tragödie*, p. 110). Various contingent historical and human factors with which basically Lu-

ther's "new theology" had nothing to do, became fatefully involved in it and tore it out of its original path into one of a completely different kind. Above all it was the contemporary atmosphere in Germany, preconditioned by centuries of political and economic misdevelopment, and at that time heavily charged against Rome, into which Luther's struggle against indulgences, begun out of purely theological and pastoral motives, kindled simply by chance ("with the unsuspecting audacity of a *Parcival*", *Die deutsche Tragödie*, p. 72) in such a way that it produced a public movement of quite a different spirit. This movement then carried Luther along with its own dynamic force in a direction in which originally he did not want to go, especially since he had learned, in defending himself against the charge of heresy, which wounded him most profoundly, to appeal to the general mood of the public with his newly-discovered brilliant and dangerous journalistic ability (as "Flight into public life" *Die deutsche Tragödie*, p. 102) and since he was certain of approval.

"It was into such a time of repressed excitement that Luther's 95 Theses fell. In a flash he saw himself borne up by public opinion far beyond his expectations, because the nation was waiting for a sweeping change of all conditions, which appeared to be ripe as soon as any bold deed came to pass. Here was someone who was obviously in the right and was not to be allowed to carry his point. Luther had had his eye on only a theological question and suddenly saw that he had set quite different things in motion." (*Die deutsche Tragödie*, p. 38) "Luther had not thought of such a far-reaching effect. He was dismayed by the strange power of this echo. He was answered by a choir of a thousand voices to which he had not spoken" (p. 74). "The real distinctions of doctrine around which the conflict revolved were in fact trivial. Luther's struggle against the primacy of the Pope was in the first place a struggle for his physical existence, in the second place a struggle for his moral existence, and only in the third place a struggle or indeed almost but a quarrel about dogmas." (*Die deutsche Tragödie*, p. 117).

The tragedy which took place was a double-sided one, in that Luther refused

to act as leader of the German nation in its justified grievances and instead employed the dynamism of the German movement for his ecclesiastical struggle against Rome. While in an ecclesiastical respect he went too far, in a national, social and political respect he was much too restrained and unfortunately much too restraining.

"In this situation Luther committed two errors at once. He did nothing to further the cohesion of the national will, and inversely he did something which caused serious confusion. His written address to the nobility (the promise of which he never fulfilled) was followed by the important Latin writing *De captivitate Babylonica Ecclesiae praeludium* (which in an unjustified and unnecessary way severed most profoundly the bond with the Catholic church)" (*Die deutsche Tragödie*, p. 150).

Added to this was the violence of Luther's unbridled temperament which in the course of the dispute grew continually more extreme, radical and unjust, and which held tenaciously to impossibly extreme assertions.

"From now on Luther had in all earnestness to make himself familiar with the notion that according to Roman concepts he was a heretic. His first reaction to this embarrassing situation was to be convinced that the Antichrist was ruling in Rome. For this he found the eschatological frame of mind useful which is characteristic of the basic attitude of this time ... From this basic start there now followed, however, the whole flood of blasphemous insults which with a display of an unheard-of and indefatigable polemical talent he poured out upon Rome ... What passions Luther's lack of moderation brought into play on both sides at that time can hardly be imagined today, even when one has an exact knowledge of the documents. In the second place, however, and that makes Luther's attitude perhaps even more dangerous, he makes use of the apparent mystical formula of seeing in affliction the real touchstone of true Christianity. This idea appears already in the early lectures and now receives a practical utility of tremendous range. I should be sorry, says Luther in effect in innumerable places, if I ever taught to please the Pope; for then my teaching

would be to God's harm. Here we have the basic positive religious motive for his defiance." (*Die deutsche Tragödie*, p. 117 f.).

Above all, however, there is added to this very unscrupulous and completely undiscerning way in which, as though stricken with blindness, the Romans pursued the case against Luther and showed no appreciation whatever of his profoundly justified religious and theological aims or of the atmosphere in Germany which was so dangerously charged.

"But Luther was unfair to the biblical conscience of the old church only from the time that people began to call him a heretic and to put him on trial in a matter in which he saw justice and the Word of God on his side and in which public opinion backed him up with impressive power ... It is certain that Luther's first judges were quite unaware of whom they were driving out of the church." (*Der katholische Luther*, p. 81 f.) "Nowhere does the Christian believer, whatever his confession, experience the tragedy of the split in the church more sharply than in reading these writings." (The edifying writings of Luther, especially the treatise *On the Freedom of a Christian Man*, to which all Meissinger's affection is devoted). "For 400 years there has been something perverse in the fact that the author of these writings has been for the Catholic church the chief of heretics." (p. 101).

In regard to the completion of the "tragedy" there is, as we have said, only the sketch of Meissinger's second book available. The corroboration of his theses by individual historical examples is lacking, and it is open to question whether they could be supported by factual material. Here too, for a judgment of Luther's real "Reformation" period, it would be necessary to bring more strongly and profoundly into consideration than Meissinger does the genuinely theological motives; but then much would take on a different appearance, or would at least present itself with more subtlety of distinction than appears in Meissinger's fundamentally over-simplified scheme.

In spite of their obvious bias and their apparent deficiencies, Meissinger's theses still retain a heuristic significance and seem to us worthy of serious consideration. They

exhibit many important points of view which Protestant Luther research in general passes by too quickly. Above all the deepest aims which stand at the back of them and the questions which are here brought up, are really to be taken more seriously than is generally the case, precisely in Luther research. Even if the solution is not so easily reached as in Meislinger, and the series of problems is more difficult and lies deeper, we should nevertheless put these problems to ourselves more than we do.

* * *

The book, here under review, by Seeberg, who died in 1945, is an unaltered reprint of his *Theologie Luthers in ihren Grundzügen*, which first appeared in 1940. It is a matter for rejoicing that since 1950 it has now become available again, since alongside the numerous monographs on individual points of Luther's theology there is hardly any more recent total presentation of it. In spite of all its taut complexity and all the difficult series of problems in its interpretation, there must however be continually new attempts to grasp it as a whole. Seeberg's presentation is in its way a brilliant projection. In its way of thinking it follows that of Karl Holl, but in essential things it goes empathically beyond Holl. Outwardly it forms a happy medium between too minute an examination and too short a summary. Behind it must be seen Seeberg's thorough researches into the theology of Luther, particularly his two volumes on his view of God and his christology. It is clear that such a characteristic total presentation, which represents the balance of a lifelong, thorough concern with Luther's theology, could only be republished unaltered. But for the sake of the subject it is to be regretted that there is no trace of the intensive progress since 1940 of research into and interpretation of Luther's theology; at least the literature survey ought to have been extended!

Seeberg goes beyond Holl in that (like Erich Vogelsang) he sees in Luther's view of the crucified Christ the real point of his theology, from which in all its diversity it derives its inner unity. Luther's characteristic view of God and his doctrine of justification, his conception of the Word of God and of the church, his way of looking at history and his ethics, etc., are ultimately

to be understood from the starting-point of the individuality of his view of Christ. Seeberg speaks of the "great idea of God's becoming man in Christ" as the "key to Luther's" theology" (p. 82) or "that the theology of Luther is based on the conception of Christ as the archetype" (p. 88). What Seeberg means more exactly by this may be made clear by a few quotations:

"The picture of Christ as seen originally by Luther is behind his view of God. It must be continually emphasized that the death of Christ and his resurrection are the most profound and vivid expression of the nature and action of the hidden God" and: "It was in the death and resurrection of Christ that Luther came upon his paradoxical original idea of the doctrine of justification. Justification is Christ tropologically interpreted." (p. 63 f.) "What is primary in Luther's theology is his view of Christ. In him who was crucified Luther recognized that everywhere in life God works in antithesis to reason and against nature; particularly is this so in religion. The Cross reveals to him the law of 'antithesis' as God's law of life. On the Cross God betrays his secret." (p. 24) "The man Christ shows us the almighty God, as he wants to be seen by us and for us." (p. 75) "Since the climax and revelation of this irrational activity of God is the death of Christ on the Cross, faith in the hidden God coincides essentially with faith in Christ. The *deus absconditus* is the *deus crucifixus*." (p. 62 f.) "The basic theological idea gained from the sight of him who was crucified immediately gives to Luther's total view its direction and character." (p. 47) "In Christ Luther became aware that God brings to consummation when he destroys, quickens when he brings to the Cross, saves when he condemns . . . of decisive importance for this conception for Luther is the "Urbild" [original picture] Christ, in whom God has revealed how he treats what is his in his world." (p. 54 f.) "Christ is at the back of Luther's doctrine of justification. It is by origin a view of Christ formed by the Psalms, according to which Christ is the one who is victorious in suffering and draws all men to him. In tropological exegesis, that is, one which is personally applied, it follows that the pious person

who wants to come to God must take this way... This law of life, that everything passes through death unto true life, was revealed to Luther in Christ and then transformed into his doctrine of justification." (p. 84)

From this orientation Seeberg shows the individual facets of Luther's theology according to their meaning and significance; his view of God (IV), his christology (V), his conception of sin (VI), of justification (VII), of Word and sacrament (VIII), of the church (IX) and his ethics (X). These are preceded by a basic summary of the fundamental elements of Luther's theology (III) and two chapters on the growth of Luther's theology, firstly in regard to his personal religious development (I) and secondly in regard to the history of theology (II). According to Seeberg, Luther research has to maintain in its method the happy medium between a "psychological" attitude and one arising from the nature of the subject itself [i. e. a *theological attitude*] (pp. 21-23).

We cannot go into the details of Seeberg's presentation in its attempt to give the original content of Luther's theology a radical, vivid and lively voice. There is much that seems to me particularly apt, among other things for example, his interpretation of what Luther really meant by the "hidden" God (p. 61 ff.), or of Luther's profound conception of sin (p. 103 ff.), or of the theocentric and dynamic character of his doctrine of justification (p. 114 ff.) or of his basic conception of the church (pp. 164 ff.); there is much that seems to me to necessitate a critical judgment, among other things for example his "Urbild" theory in regard to the significance of Christ for Luther, or his interpretation of "transcendentalism" in Luther, almost in the way of a "circular argument in the psychology of religion" [Religionspsychologischer Zirkel] (cf. pp. 49-52, 97 f., 121, among others) or of the real structure of his doctrine of justification wholly in an "Osiandritic" sense (p. 118 f.), or his theory that Luther oriented justification entirely towards the activity of the new creature (cf. pp. 115, 123 f.).

What seems to me particularly open to question is the way in which all through his presentation Seeberg conceives of Luther's theology basically as the creative

perception of a religious genius (cf. in conclusion p. 213 ff.) and from there expands it into a general rule of life. It is significant that when dealing with the basic elements of Luther's theology he speaks of the "*basic philosophical and religious ideas*" (heading of Chap. III) and that in the concluding observations on "The significance of Luther's Reformation in the history of the world" (Chap. XI) he deals only with the significance of Luther in the history of religion" and with the relationship of "Christianity and culture". That which is new in Luther, which is always characterized as "religion", is seen fundamentally in the fact that he "inaugurates a new stage in the history of religion" (p. 213), and the chief significance of his Reformation insight is seen in the break-through of a new understanding of life and a new world view. Under the influence of this clearly predominating interest in "the history of thought and culture" [Geistesgeschichte] and the "philosophy of history" the dialectics of the revelation of God as working in antithesis (which forms the inner unity of Luther's theology) is imperceptibly transformed into a dynamic world view of antithesis, which in German idealism drew together in a creative synthesis the elements, related in themselves, which originated in Luther and German mysticism (see Wilhelm Maurer, "Die Einheit der Theologie Luthers" ["The Unity of Luther's Theology"] in *Theologische Literatur Zeitung* 1950, Vol. 4/5, and cf. especially Seeberg, pp. 46 ff., 58 f., 223 ff., 165). Undoubtedly it is important to ask about the philosophical consequences of Luther's view of God and of his new conception of man, and to fit his Reformation insight into the context of the whole history of thought in the West, for Luther had a lasting influence upon it, and it cannot be conceived of without him. But one must nevertheless at the same time take account of the fact that it was the prime intention of Luther's Reformation insight to be and remain a theology of revelation! In this connection the latest Luther research, which is of the opinion that it could not go any further along the lines of Holl's school, has in many points a more profound and accurate perception. May there one day grow out of it too a similarly vivid and gifted general presentation of Luther's theology! *Ernst Kinder*

On Luther's Theology and its Influence on the History of Thought

PEREGRINATIO. *Studien zur reformatorischen Theologie und zum Kirchenproblem.* [Peregrinatio. Studies on the theology of the Reformation and on the problem of the church] By Ernst Wolf. Munich: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1954.

LUTHER IM SPIEGEL DER DEUTSCHEN GEISTESGESCHICHTE [Luther reflected in the history of German thought.] By Heinrich Bornkamm. Heidelberg: Verlag Quelle und Meyer, 1955.

LUTHERS GEISTIGE WELT [Luther's spiritual and intellectual world] By Heinrich Bornkamm, Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1953.

D. MARTIN LUTHER. By Heinrich Faulstich. Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag in collaboration with Quell-Verlag, 1955.

The volume of essays entitled *Peregrinatio* brings together thirteen studies which originated in the period between 1934 and 1951 and which had already been published in various periodicals to which today it is generally difficult to gain access. Therefore their collection and republication must be welcomed, all the more so, since the author has taken the trouble to revise once more all the essays and expand and correct them in the light of literature which has meanwhile appeared.

Under the central aspect of "Luthers preaching of Christ" (pp. 30-80) Prof. Wolf both in his own presentation and in detailed notes gives a critical evaluation of almost the whole of German-language Luther literature since 1860—beginning with the works of Theodore von Harnack and J. Köstlin and going up to the latest publications of Wilhelm Maurer and Gerhard Ebeling. In spite of the author's comprehensive knowledge of the subject and his desire to achieve as objective an evaluation as possible, the explanations given by him are here and there not entirely free from one-sided and oversharped judgments. This must also be said of the essay "Politia Christi. The problem of social ethics in Lutheranism" (pp. 214-242). The attempts there undertaken to refute the arguments brought by Helmuth Thielicke against Karl Barth's social ethics are no more convincing than the assertion that K. Barth's writing *Christengemeinde und Bürgergemeinde* proves itself closer to the beginnings of

Luther's Reformation thinking than do Thielicke's theses (cf. p. 240 f.). Thielicke is indeed by no means alone in his criticism. Even before him the late Erlangen systematician Werner Elert had already come to similar conclusions. And recently the Swedish theologians Gustaf Wingren and Gunnar Hillerdal have established in thorough analyses that Karl Barth's definition of the relationship of Law and Gospel, and also his social, ethics, are incompatible with the central point of Luther's theology and with the Lutheran doctrine of the two realms.

Ernst Wolf concerns himself further with Luther and Reformation theology in subsequent essays: "Martin Luther"; "The Gospel and Religion"; "On the Problem of Consensus from the Point of View of the Reformation"; "Sola Gratia?"; "Leviathan. A patristic note on Luther's criticism of the Papacy"; "On the question of natural law in Thomas Aquinas and in Luther". Under the heading "The unity of the church in the witness of the Reformation" and "On the administration of the sacraments according to Luther and Lutheran doctrine" the author provides important contributions to the present discussion on the problem of the church, to which another four separate studies are dedicated. Unfortunately in his treatment of the theme "Sanctorum Communio—Deliberations on the problem of the romanticization of the concept of the church" Wolf could not take into consideration the significant work by Elert entitled *Abendmahl und Kirchengemeinschaft in der alten Kirche, hauptsächlich des Ostens* [Communion and church fellowship in the ancient Church, chiefly in the East] (Berlin: 1954), which appeared at about the same time.

All the essays show the author's individuality in combining the analysis of historical material with a systematic evaluation and from the results thus gained establishing individual lines for the guiding of further theological research and church work.

A long-felt gap in Luther literature has been filled by the Heidelberg church historian, Heinrich Bornkamm, in his work *Luther im Spiegel der deutschen Geistesgeschichte*. The reader obtains here an excellent survey of the reactions of important writers and philosophers, historians and theologians to the personality and the work of Martin Luther. It should be stressed that

the work under consideration by no means represents a mere "anthology of eulogies of Luther", but reproduces "the voices of keenest criticism" as well.

The author begins with a presentation (pp. 11-116) delineating the development leading from the picture of Luther held by German classicism (Lessing, Hamann, Herder, Goethe, Schiller) and that held by the idealist philosophers (Kant, Fichte, Hegel) to the notable change in the understanding of Luther within modern Catholic theology (J. Lortz, J. Hessen).

This presentation, written with a brilliant knowledge of the subject, is followed by selected texts (pp. 117-352) forming a collection of sources which both holds the reader's attention and stimulates him to reflection. The selection has been undertaken with care and skill, although for technical reasons of course only a limited number of authors could be quoted. Nor is it claimed that the texts printed are an exhaustive reproduction of all that has been said. This fact will have to be borne in mind continually while reading. For the picture of Luther given by individual authors is undoubtedly more varied and full of nuances, but at times also more contradictory and full of tension than the sources here printed reveal.

This is true for example of Hegel who, in his youthful writings which are not quoted by Bornkamm, expressed himself on Luther in a thoroughly critical manner, whereas in later works he publicly avows that he is a Lutheran and emerges as a conscious defender of the Reformation. The young Hegel writes: "How far removed, for example, Luther was from the idea of the worship of God in spirit and in truth is shown by his regrettable controversies with Zwingli, Oecolamadius etc. . . ." (*Hegels theologische Jugendschriften*, ed. by H. Nohl, Tübingen: 1907, p. 42). As Professor in Berlin, on the other hand, he declares: "Therefore Luther could do nothing else than hold firm in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, in which everything is concentrated. Even to the Reformed church he could not concede that Christ was a mere memorial, a remembrance, . . ." (cf. Bornkamm p. 151).

In his book *Luthers geistige Welt* Heinrich Bornkamm leads us from the effects in the history of thought released in the Germanspeaking area by the work of the Reformation back to Luther himself. Admittedly,

anyone who takes up this book in the expectation of finding in it a penetrating scholarly analysis of Luther's relationship to the philosophical and theological tendencies of the end of the fifteenth century will perhaps be somewhat disappointed. For this question is not taken up more closely, but is only touched upon incidentally. This is connected with the fact that the author has no intention of breaking new ground but is concerned instead to present in a generally intelligible form the conclusions which have already been gained by research. He wants to "pass on to the man of today" some of the fruits of the Luther research which has been so diligently pursued and to "make tangible something of the contemporary relevance of Luther and his world of faith" (p. 7).

This by no means simple task has been achieved by the author in a way which is in fact exemplary. It can be seen from his clearly arranged and fluently written text that there are behind this book many years of work on Luther's writings and a comprehensive acquaintance with modern Luther research, even though—to preserve the character of the book—the writer refrained from scholarly controversy and long footnotes. Many a false or one-sided judgment which can be read in earlier Luther presentations has here been corrected without much attention being drawn to the fact.

After an introductory biographical chapter which makes the reader familiar with the principal events in Luther's life, the author treats one after another the most important themes of Luther's theology (The 95 theses, God hidden and revealed, Faith, The sacrament, Life and death, The meaning of the church, Grace or atonement?, The image of nature, God and history). Three chapters are devoted to Luther's social ethics (The people, The state, The Gospel and the social world). What seems to me important here among other things is the indication that in his pronouncements about Emperor and princes, people and state, obedience to the authorities and the right of resistance Luther spoke not as a theorist on matters of state but in the first place as a pastor of souls and a guide on matters of conscience (cf. p. 261 f). Accordingly it will be necessary always to exercise extreme caution in a systematic evaluation of these socio-ethical pronouncements. In the last three chapters of the book

H. Bornkamm deals with Luther's translation of the New Testament and with the themes "Luther and the German *Geist*" and "The death and legacy of Luther".

In view of the constantly growing interest in Luther and Luther research which is to be observed today in the Anglo-Saxon countries one could wish that this book of Bornkamm's might soon be translated into English. For it not only has the advantage of having presented Luther's basic theological ideas in a relevant and easily comprehensible form, but in addition it constantly refers to those events in contemporary history which have a decisive significance for the understanding of many of Luther's writings and decisions. Precisely on account of this Bornkamm's book is in a special way fitted to smooth the way for those who are concerned to gain a true understanding of the theology of the great Reformer.

The appearance of Heinrich Fausel's book *D. Martin Luther*, which in its original form was the sixth volume of the Calwer Luther Edition, must also be most warmly welcomed. By means of a prudent revision and expansion of this Calwer volume the author has created an independent work. It has two things in common with Bornkamm's *Luthers geistige Welt*: it has grown out of scholarly labor in the life work of Martin Luther and it is addressed above all to the wide circle of readers among congregational members.

The individuality of Fausel's work lies in the fact that in it a biography of Luther is skillfully combined with a collection of sources to form a whole. The passages taken from the Weimar Edition and supplied with exact references to their sources are introduced and annotated by the author and set in the historical context to which they belong. The whole presentation is constructed chronologically, and extends from Luther's youth and his time in the monastery to the year of his death. Because the author has also quoted in detail from Luther's letters and his Table Talks, he has succeeded in sketching an extremely vivid picture of the Reformer and in showing both his personal interests and his theological motives. For the sake of general intelligibility Luther's German is put into good modern German and the passages printed are supplied with headings and explanatory notes. All these qualities, together with the

detailed index of references, names and subjects, make Fausel's book an excellent one to work with.

One can only hope that the works of Bornkamm and Fausel, which represent valuable aids particularly for theological students and which can stimulate the reader to independent Luther study, will find as wide a public as possible.

Gottfried Hornig

Ministry, Priesthood and the History of Dogma from a Reformed Point of View

ROYAL PRIESTHOOD By T. F. Torrance (Scottish Journal of Theology Occasional Papers No. 5) Edinburgh: 1955.

THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF THE MINISTRY By J. K. S. Reid. (Scottish Journal of Theology Occasional Papers No. 4) Edinburgh: 1955.

DAS ALTKIRCHLICHE DOGMA IN DER REFORMATION [*The dogma of the ancient church in the Reformation*] By Jan Koopmans; trans. from the Dutch by Heinrich Quistorp. (Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie, Theologische Abhandlungen; Ed by E. Wolf, Vol. 22) Munich: 1955.

The monographs by Torrance and Reid are no "unpremeditated" investigations in dogmatics or exegetics. What makes these two studies in the realm of the ministry and priesthood of Christ and his church worthwhile and elucidating for readers outside of England and Scotland is twofold. First, the thorough biblical foundation of the arguments is worth noting, which seeks to view and evaluate without prejudice the exegetical material. The reader is struck by Reid's care and incisiveness in investigation and Torrance's broad general survey. Second is the ecumenical interest with which these series of biblical and dogmatic questions are handled, which has as its aim a particular ecclesiastical situation. If Reid is relatively cautious in this respect, Torrance offers in every way a work aimed at union which is directed toward the churches of England and Scotland which find themselves in reunion conversations. For "the time has arrived for them to unite in a plenitude of faith and order in which neither will be

the poorer but both be the richer" (Torrance, p. vii; cf. also p. 108).

Reid's study is limited to the theme of the ministry of Christ, the Apostles and the church, as seen from the *diakonia* [service] of Christ (Luke 22:27 and parallels). It is primarily the ministry of *preaching*, the ministry of proclamation by messengers in the name of Christ, and has been transmitted to the church as such. Against Congregationalist thought, it is shown that already in Acts 8:14 ff. evidence is given for the Apostolic oversight of congregations grown up independently (p. 24 f.). The chief discussion, however, is carried on with Anglican theologians. We can only mention the questions touched upon here. The New Testament knows not only one, but three different designations of disciples by Christ. In how far is the ministry of proclamation an office, or merely a function? Does not the "order" of the Twelve, definitely circumscribed as it is in the history of salvation, have a certain "indelible character"? Was not the circle of the Twelve expanded to an Apostolate whose authority springs from the personal witness to the resurrection of Christ? Can the late Jewish institution of the *shaliach* form the actual basis for the transmission of the office of the Apostles to the bishops of the second century? Reid's study gives information worth reading on these and other problems of the New Testament doctrine of the ministry.

Out of the wealth of material to be found in Torrance's book, we should like to draw attention to the following argumentation. Jesus Christ is, in the sense of Heb. 3:1 ff., the Apostle and High Priest who unites in himself by virtue of the incarnation both the revelatory turning of God to man and the obedient turning of man to God. By her conformity to the priestly suffering servant of God the church partakes of this God-man revelation. For this reason the church is no continuation of the incarnation, but nevertheless an analogy and reflection of this once and for all Christ event. Central to the New Testament are its statements about the church as the body of Christ, and this must be understood from the resurrected and ascended body of Christ. This body, which comprises the fullness of the new humanity, is withdrawn until the *parousia* but is present nevertheless to the members of the body as the Head, by means of the sacraments. The leadership of the church

as exercised by the ascended Lord takes place through the Holy Spirit, who should be understood strictly in terms of the *filioque* clause. This *pneuma* of the ascended Lord is Torrance's key conception. He works through the *charismata* and the sacraments which in a certain way appear to belong to the *charismata*. As *πνεῦμα* the Spirit determines the nature of the church and forms also her structure. This structure is secured by the two sacraments whose epitome is the "pneumatic" word of Christ. If the external form of church order, being under the law of "hierarchical" division, is but a transitory framework for the edification of the body, nevertheless because of its orientation toward the two sacraments, it is an "expression of the Spirit" (p. 73) and for that reason a framework corresponding to the nature of the church.

On this background Torrance interprets the royal priesthood. It is christologically based and purely ecclesiological in kind. Every individualistic "priesthood of all believers" is rejected, since it is foreign to the New Testament's corporative ecclesiological understanding of the royal priesthood. Conformity to the ascended Head is fundamentally gained by the body through baptism, for it incorporates into Christ, while the eucharist actually but renews baptism, i. e. incorporation. Thus baptism authorizes the church as a whole to carry on a "real priesthood", while to the presbyterate, i. e. the office of pastor, is entrusted the "particular priesthood", i. e. the administration of the sacrament of the altar (cf. p. 82). The presbyterate, by means of the administration of Word and sacrament, arms the church until the time of the *parousia* for carrying out of her own actual ministry. The ministry of the church in history is "the ministry of reconciliation by proclaiming the Gospel among the nations" (p. 81). But what remains is only the worship of adoration and praise of the perfected church, whom one day Christ will draw to himself as the glorified body of the baptized.

Not only the pastorate but also the episcopate has a transitory but nevertheless necessary service to render to the church. Torrance ascribes to the episcopate the right of representing, in its office of visitation (oversight), the unity and continuity of the church in her course through the centuries. Thus with Thomas Aquinas

and Calvin (!) the prerogative is given the presbyter-bishop who presides over the corporative presbyterate and merely represents it, in contradistinction to Anglican individualization of the episcopal office. The argument, written not without fervor, closes with a twofold plea: that the Anglican episcopate and the corporative presbyterate of the Scottish church might be assimilated, and that intercommunion be introduced between the two churches as soon as possible.

Jan Koopman's book on the dogma of the ancient church in the Reformation leads us into quite another area of theology. The doctoral dissertation by this young Dutchman, who was prematurely and tragically called away, should claim the full interest especially of Lutheran theology. Pastor Quistorp, a friend of Koopman's, is to be thanked for presenting this study in a fluent German translation.

Koopman presupposes a knowledge of the total field of the history of dogma and therefore his presentation is only fully comprehensible to experts in the field. However, it is worthwhile to follow his expert discussion of the trinitarian-christological dogma of the ancient church down to the Reformation. Koopman points out that the doctrine of the Reformers, Luther, (Zwingli, Melancthon) and Calvin, is rooted more deeply in the ancient and scholastic central dogma of the church than has been held since Ritschl. The Reformers, in different ways, it is true, took over the trinitarian-christological dogma, winning from it their own understanding and appropriating it in church practice. However, this is only true in a limited measure for Zwingli and Melancthon. For this reason this study is based primarily on material found in Luther and Calvin. In carrying out a comparison between these two men, Koopman reveals himself to be a convinced Calvinist, by following an old Reformed tradition. This tradition considers Luther the fundamental background for Calvin and considers Calvin to have overcome Luther's formal inconsistencies and "Catholic vestiges". Seen as a whole, Koopman's presentation is characterized by an emphasis on the individuality of the two Reformers, but even more, on what they have in common.

Each confesses the dogma of the ancient church as the fundamental "hermeneutic

principle". If Luther emphasizes christology more strongly than Calvin, the latter places the doctrine of the trinity decisively in the foreground. This fact is not interpreted exclusively as a mere distinction in accentuation of the same basic understanding. For in both doctrines Koopman tries to show that Calvin was the first to defend in a completely consistent way and present in mature form the insight of the Reformation. "Whereas realism involuntarily continued to give to the Lutheran doctrine of the *communicatio idiomatum* a certain sacramental materiality [Dinglichkeit], Calvin, in this point too, carried through the Reformation view when he 'places faith in between'" (p. 97). Thus Luther's christology appears, in his doctrine of the sacrament, as an untenable mixed form between the "material christology" of Peter Lombard and the "spiritual christology" of Calvin. "For that reason Calvin thankfully views himself as a pupil of Luther's and yet found himself having to condemn his doctrine of the sacrament as a foreign element" (p. 79 f). But also in the doctrine of the trinity Calvin is more dependable than Luther. Luther holds in general the Augustinian (i. e. the Western church's) doctrinal form, it is true but occasionally he tends toward many a heterodox mollification (as did Joachim de Fiore and Duns Scotus) and now and then is not able to free himself from an "objectivization" of this doctrine. Also in the question of the *vestigia trinitatis* it becomes apparent that Luther's doctrine is still under the shadow of a certain scholastic heritage. In contrast to this, Calvin succeeds, in a happy analysis of the trinitarian concept from the point of view of *persona*, in drawing the sum and substance out of the history of the doctrine of the trinity. "Thus he comes to recognize the faith of the church, which continues through the ages, but not without critical insights in regard to its actual history" (p. 74).

Koopmann is not content, however, to point out in what sense Luther and Calvin interpreted the dogma of the ancient church in taking it over. He consummates his series of thoughts by pointing out that the Reformation has its actual significance for the history of dogma "in the discovery and development of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit" (p. 112). Beginnings made in both the Eastern church and the West were fully

developed by the Reformation on the basis of the trinitarian-christological dogma in the Reformation doctrine of the Word effected by the Spirit and faith effected by the Spirit. For Luther it is the doctrine of justification and for Calvin the doctrine of election which is characteristic. "Justification and election, these really intrinsic Protestant doctrinal articles, are not only inconceivable apart from a foundation in the ancient church's doctrine of the trinity and christology, but they represent their necessary development and application" (p. 115).

This noteworthy conclusion is more outlined than proven in the concise argument of the study. For this reason, the most genuine thanks owed by Calvinist and Lutheran theology to the thoroughly stimulating work of this historian of dogma, so prematurely called away, may consist in his having opened up the great theme of the Reformation, the trinitarian-christological doctrine of the Holy Spirit. No doubt, in this the difference in understanding of what Reformation faith is would stand out more clearly than in Koopman's friendly polemic against Luther. Koopman expressly draws the consequence from Calvin's theology that a realistic sacrament has been completely transcended by Reformation faith. It is obvious, however, that the rivalry between sacrament and faith is naturally foreign to the Lutheran Reformation, because it is unbiblical.

August Kimme

Theology and Education

EVANGELISCHE LEHRE VON DER ERZIEHUNG [*Evangelical doctrine of education*]. By Oskar Hammelsbeck. Munich: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1950.

ERZIEHUNG UND KERYGMA. Ein Beitrag zum Gespräch zwischen Erziehungswissenschaft und Theologie. [*Education and kerygma, a contribution to the conversation between the science of education and theology*]. By Kurt Frör. Munich: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1952.

GRUNDLAGEN DER ERZIEHUNG. Die Pädagogik in der Verantwortung vor Gott. [*The foundations of education; the philosophy of education in responsibility before*

God]. By Gerhard Bohne. Hamburg: Furcht-Verlag.

Vol. I: *Die Wahrheit über den Menschen und die Erziehung* [Education and the truth concerning man] 1951.

Vol. II: *Aufgabe und Weg der Erziehung* [The task and path of education] 1953.

DER ERZIEHER ALS CHRIST [*The educator as a Christian*]. By Helmuth Kittel. Second edition. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1953.

RELIGIONSUNTERRICHT UND JUGENDSEELSORGE IN PSYCHOLOGISCHER SICHT [*Religious instruction and the pastoral care of youth from a psychological point of view*]. By Ernst Jahn. Heidelberg: Quelle und Meyer, 1955.

URCHRISTLICHES ERZIEHUNGSDENKEN. Die Paidia Kyriu im Rahmen der hellenistisch-jüdischen Umwelt. [*Primitive Christian thought on education. The paidia kyriu (discipline of the Lord) in the framework of the Hellenistic-Jewish environment*]. By Werner Jentsch. (Vol. 45. No. 3 of the series "Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie"). Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1951.

The decade since 1945 in Germany in the area of religious education has been characterized by a whole series of important new books. The conversation between theology and education has been taken up again after the enforced interlude during the years 1933-45, after the estrangement, however, between the two disciplines had long before become more and more clear. This is extremely encouraging—though it is the more difficult when one considers the multitude of recent questions of both disciplines which have to be worked out. We should like to select a series of examples from among the manifold problems touched upon and from among the critical questions arising out of the different presentations. It should be emphasized at the beginning that the contributions to the conversation between theology and education here considered, despite many a reservation which is to be made, are by no means to be underestimated. In fact only then will one be able to do justice to the presentations when one sees in them not patent solutions but a challenge to collaborate in further thinking in an area whose many tasks cannot be

solved on the spur of the moment. And here too there is ultimately a positive side to the publications mentioned, which prove quite clearly how many unsolved questions still remain, even though individual items appear to have brought a solution closer.

One of the problems which perhaps has made the conversation between theology and education most difficult can be seen in the much-discussed slogan: "the autonomy of education". Sufficient thought is not always given to the fact this formulation in itself arose out of a quite different situation in the history of ideas. Though originally it was a matter of liberating education from a dubious clerical tutelage—even though in an earlier enlightened élan one occasionally overshot the mark in formulating this demand—nevertheless today, parallel to many changes on the part of theology, there is apparent on the part of education a thoroughly relevant and acceptable way of speaking of the so-called autonomy of education. This can be traced very well in the work of the Göttingen education theorist E. Weniger (cf. his volume of essays *Die Eigenständigkeit der Erziehung in Theorie und Praxis*, [the independence of education in theory and practice]—Weinheim: 1952). On the theological side Frör's expositions seem to be very helpful; they culminate in the assertion that there must be clarity on the question, "that theology recognizes the science of education as being just as autonomous as the other sciences" *Erziehung und Kerygma*, p. 8). That unquestionably demands also the recognition of theology on the part of education. "It is not the business of theology to develop an apocryphal philosophy of education. . . . And it is not the business of education to develop out of ideological presuppositions a substitute theology . . ." (p. 9). With these sentences of Frör's the positions are correctly defined. If one pursues them further to the necessary depth, it is apparent that even in a changed situation in theology and thought the point of crystallization of the possibility of conservation lies in fact there. Or, better put, here it is fully and clearly apparent that the relationship of theology to education is only a special instance of the relationship of theology to a "secular science". In the framework of a book review it is impossible to take a detailed

stand in relation to the problem. Yet behind it there lies one of the urgent and still by no means thoroughly clarified theological questions of our time. One must in any case say that no service is rendered toward removing the difficulties and burdens—in regard to the development of which theology is not without guilt—when, as in Bohne's works (*Grundlagen der Erziehung* I, P. 237) these are too hastily disposed of.

Apart from all the individual questions which might be raised positively or negatively in connection with the publications under consideration, one very soon runs up against a further decisively fundamental problem of the conversation between theology and education in general, namely: What is the relationship presupposed between theological and educational statements? It is obvious that the theologian or the teacher of religion will always be concerned even in his educational work, to examine the Bible for its "statements" on the theme. One cannot attempt theologically to clarify any educational orientations unless one goes back each time to the appropriate biblical references. That this happens can be positively seen in regard to the publications under review. (In this connection Werner Jentsch pursues quite a different path; see below.) But despite every recognition to be given to this endeavor, it appears to us to be necessary to ask whether the connection drawn between theology and education, which occasionally becomes obvious, can in every case be endorsed. In my opinion this is not always the case. One becomes even more sceptical in viewing and testing the occasionally too strongly "educationalizing exegesis" in many of the theological parts. Bohne's understanding of the Kingdom of God and its righteousness (*Grundlagen der Erziehung* II, p. 72 ff.) and of Jesus as educator (I, p. 132 ff.) for example, will hardly be acceptable; Hammelsbeck's remarks in regard to the creation account (*Evangelische Lehre von der Erziehung*, p. 61 ff.) will have to be described at least as the highly one-sided isolation of theological statements. Now it is however quite decisive that the "pedagogical conclusions" drawn from such argumentation by Bohne, just as by Hammelsbeck and Frör, can be completely endorsed. In fact

it is precisely in them that essential insights of more recent religious education lie, for example when Hammelsbeck very expressly demands "education on the basis of the Gospel" rather than "education toward the Gospel" (p. 126 ff.), when Bohne speaks of an aid to life [Lebenshilfe] and the three great tasks of education (II, p. 74 ff.) and when Frör speaks about example and forgiveness (p. 47 f.). In this way we could continue. All of these individual thoughts can be affirmed without reservation; in their structure, however, they are linked in such a way that the connection is not always convincing. It is certainly not by chance that this series of problems here emerges so clearly, for the question concerning theology and education is especially in this point only a concrete example of the many ramifications involved in the problem of the encounter between God and the world, theology and the "secular sciences" or, expressed in personal terms, Christ and secular life. Even today Frör's statement from 1933 is true: "The education activity of the Christian is a special instance in Christian activity as a whole" (*Was ist evangelische Erziehung?* p. 6).

The relationship between theology and education in the more recent history of thought is traced by Bohne in the first volume of his *Grundlagen der Erziehung*. Such an historical survey is without question necessary precisely for an understanding of the present-day situation, but till now this has not been exhaustively carried out. We are without doubt children of the age of the Enlightenment in all our thinking. And this age continually needs to be re-investigated. One will not be able to say that Bohne's statements (I, p. 11-39) have done justice to the many-sided problems which the Enlightenment and its influence present to us. Rather one will be shocked by many over-crude simplifications. Therefore Bohne unfortunately in this point does not fill in the gap left by the books here under consideration, but rather there exists the danger of many an unjust evaluation and judgment; on the other hand, however, we find in the large sections entitled "Self-knowledge before God" (p. 82 ff.) "Self-knowledge without God" (p. 164 ff.) and "Reality and education" (p. 220 ff.) many penetrating and well-formulated insights.

Special notice should be given to the book of Helmuth Kittel, which is in the meantime in its second edition. Even the title "*The educator as a Christian*" points to the personal orientation of the book. Seen from a structural point of view it is concerned not "with the usual scientific debate with different points of view, but rather in the full sense of the word with a "paraenetic" [admonitory] book, and since for a valid *paraenesis* there must always be the elaboration of a great number of objective questions, there appears behind the arguments directed at the teacher in his everyday reality the debate with modern theology and education. The reader is offered the results of the debate which has taken place. That makes this book a pastoral book, in which the basic questions of Christian living and particularly of the teacher as a Christian are dealt with. This is done very thoroughly; at the beginning of each separate section, almost as an introduction, there is to be found a biblical quotation and a quotation taken often from some less well-known writings of Luther's. Kittel's book can be described, in the best sense of the word, as an attempt at "vocational lay dogmatics" directed at our times. It represents a real help for the teacher on the road which has been recognized more keenly since 1945 as common to both church and school.

Similarly to the way in which Kittel has made the insights of modern theology fruitful for the life of a teacher, one might wish that the pronouncements of modern psychology might be brought into confrontation with theology and ultimately be evaluated for use in religious instruction. In any case Jahn's book (*Religionsunterricht und Jugendseelsorge in psychologischer Sicht*), is but a partial success despite every recognition of the earnest endeavor that went into it. But the largely fragmentary and aphoristic character of the book renders the discussion more difficult, because at decisive points one is perhaps too often put off with a reference to the limited amount of space available. Thus the train of thought suffers frequently from a lack of consistency and compactness. Without wishing to pass judgment on the individual psychological statements, we must say that many theological and religious-educational inferences have a dubious ring, particularly those affecting the whole

section "on the presentation of faith" (p. 62 ff.). Here particularly the author seems to us to be concerned with numerous exegetical and primarily theological questions. It is not a matter of theologically withdrawing in horror before psychological insights—incidentally, Jahn reproaches theology for doing this, and in regard to the past he is certainly justified—but it is a matter of standing at the summit of present-day theological scholarship and raising questions about the theological relevance of modern psychology. That seems to us to be the problem which from now on awaits solution. Jahn's treatment can be said to have succeeded in this only in certain details, perhaps especially in the really convincing section "The holy and the hobgoblins" (p. 120 ff.).

The basic questions of education and of teaching are considered under many aspects in all the books under review, but perhaps the most penetrating illumination is found in the second volume of Böhne's *Grundlagen der Erziehung* and in Hammelsbeck's *Evangelische Lehre von der Erziehung*. In Böhne's work we come upon a wealth of penetrating analyses of the task of the educator seen from a theological point of view. The fact that there the educational statements are often much more convincing than the theological ones is due to the difficulty mentioned above. But one must by no means overlook the fact that a real culminating point of Böhne's work is found precisely here in the educational parts. Hammelsbeck, in his at times very independent and emphatic style, gives important hints on the doubtfulness of all "man-patterned education" (p. 78 ff.) and applies himself thoroughly to the theological-educational problems of religious instruction, taking up a wealth of acute questions: The misunderstanding of religious or ethical instruction, change in the theory of method, the Gospel and education, etc.: particularly worthy of consideration are the arguments concerning the problems revolving around "State and School" (p. 143 ff.). We ask only one exegetical question: Does not the rendering of *παιδεία* and *νοιοῦσθαι* by "upbringing and education" presumably take no account of the statement in Ephesians 6:4?

We have by no means done justice to the wealth of statements in the literature under review, but have had to confine ourselves

to some indications of their content and critical marginal notes. It was our concern to point to the multiplicity of problems concealed in the theological-educational *mutuum colloquium* [mutual conversation] for the enrichment of which we are grateful to the present contributions.

Our theological reflection on education and educational questions must necessarily refer continually to biblical statements and be corrected by them if they are not to go astray. It is therefore a very significant occurrence that Werner Jentsch should have presented us with a comprehensive study of the statements of the New Testament and the world surrounding it on the subject of education. Firstly because we thus receive a synopsis of the "relevant material"; secondly because Jentsch's very thorough and measured exegesis corrects many current conceptions and on the other hand also reveals a whole series of new points of view; finally because Jentsch's arguments show in the end with admirable clarity what sort of educational pronouncements cannot be expected from the New Testament, because it is not interested in them. "The New Testament has no detailed evangelical philosophy of education. It has merely put the problem of education, and nothing more. Jesus did not make any fundamental statements on the question of education and its relation to the βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ [Kingdom of God] nor did the early church or Paul issue any new educational directives on particular points. We look in vain for a theological reflection on the concept *παιδεία* ["discipline"], and there is no record of any decree of the early church on the question of youth" (p. 194). (Cf. the corresponding judgment of the Old Testament in G. Bertram's article *παιδεύω* in the *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, Vol. V, p. 603.) It seems to me that, besides all the individual analyses, the very clear elaboration of this fact is one of the most vital achievements of the book and should have claim to full consideration in all our thinking on religion and education.

The author sets his treatment of the New Testament in a broad framework. By this means the separate features of the picture gain much in color, and decisive relationships and distinctions become only then

really clear. After a brief survey of the state of research (p. 10 ff.)—in which he very ably arrives at a clarification of ideas which is of benefit for the subsequent arguments—Jentsch turns in the first part to "Educational thought in New Testament times". He juxtaposes the basic features of educational thought in the Graeco-Roman world (p. 25 ff.) and in the Old Testament Judaic world (p. 85 ff.). Through many examples he convincingly shows that "Judaism made a *paideia* out of its religion and Hellenism made a religion out of its *paideia*" (p. 239, in another connection).

The second part of the book is devoted to "Educational thought in the New Testament". Proceeding from an analysis of the group of words παιδεύειν in the New Testament, the author makes a systematically arranged exegesis of all the pertinent passages, in order to inquire wherever possible into their educational relevance. In the background one can detect the man who has had practical experience in youth work and who has received from it the impulse to penetrate scientifically into his work. It does happen that in many individual exegetical questions or educational inferences one's opinion will differ from that of the writer. That does not detract from the value of the book. The very thoroughness with which the problems are approached and pursued with the New Testament as the starting-point, makes the book abundantly stimulating.

The distinctions between anthropocentric, theocentric and (for the New Testament) kyriocentric (Lord-centered) thought on education are to the point (p. 194 ff.). Ephesians 6:4, which is rightly so important for Jentsch, is unfortunately, in contrast with many other passages, not given a sufficiently exhaustive and penetrating exegesis. It is precisely here that one would have hoped to find it. The word *κυριον* (in παιδεα και νουθεα κυριου) is, it is true, correctly defined as a qualitative genitive (p. 198), but unfortunately the explanation of the concept *νουθεα* which is so important, is treated only peripherally. Certain difficulties are revealed in the statements regarding the young person, the person responsible for the education of youth and the fundamental questions of such education (p. 203 ff.). From his correct orientation—that the New Testament offers no practical system of evangelical

education—the writer can merely draw conclusions, since the New Testament itself does not make any adequate systematized statements. The question arises as to whether in the interests of the compactness of the examination greater restraint might not have been advisable here. One will not be able to give unqualified assent to a good number of the educational conclusions; for example, the end result of what is said about the aim of education seems to me questionable (p. 239). Similar hesitations arise occasionally in regard to individual statements in the section on the forms of education (p. 232 ff.). But our thanks are due to the writer for his well-founded, thorough and in any case stimulating examination.

Gerd Otto

Church and Mission in Africa

THE PLANTING OF CHRISTIANITY IN AFRICA. Vol. I to 1840; Vol. II 1840–1878; Vol. III 1878–1914. By C.P. Groves. London: Lutterworth Press, 1948, 1954, 1955.

DIE RELIGION DER AKANSTÄMME UND DAS PROBLEM IHRER BEKEHRUNG.

Eine religions- und missionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung. [The Religion of the Akan tribes and the problem of their conversion. An examination from the point of view of the history of religion and missions.] By Dr. Walter Ringwald. Stuttgart: Evangelischer Missionsverlag, 1953.

THE CHRISTIAN IMPERATIVE. By Max Warren. London: SCM Press, 1955.

We owe our sincere gratitude to Professor Groves who served 13 years as a missionary in Nigeria and later taught in Hartford, Connecticut and Selly Oak College, Birmingham, for his history of the church in Africa. The writer of these lines has also sat gratefully at his feet and sends greetings to the revered teacher and scholar. In the fourth volume of *The Planting of Christianity in Africa* the history of the church is to be continued up to 1954: then we shall have a standard work. The achievement is an impressive one and deserves the highest recognition on account of its content, presentation and general value.

What is extraordinarily helpful is the detailed and reliable index, which invites

the mission specialist as well as the church historian who may be interested in any particular item to make continuous use of the books which supply such a wealth of material.

An account of the contents is superfluous, for one knows from the title what to expect. In this work one must not desire to look for what it simply *cannot* offer in the relatively small number of pages. That means that special presentations for particular subjects and geographically defined "mission fields" of individual societies and churches are still to be used, and new ones are still to be desired.

For Groves cannot bring every detail, although it is to his credit that he surprises us with many detailed touches; for example names and data on the first African clergy; the first inter-racial marriage of an African pastor with a European girl; the first African who studied at Halle and gained his doctorate at Wittenberg and taught at German universities in Latin; the pioneer of the bicycle in East Africa, the trade in alcohol; and a great deal more. No, this large-scale work, in which an astonishing wealth of literature is assimilated, needs no recommendation. By its nature it goes beyond what is found in Latourette. Unlike Julius Richter, who in his 813-page *Geschichte der evangelischen Mission in Afrika* [History of the Evangelical Mission in Africa] (Gütersloh: 1922) proceeds regionally, Groves proceeds chronologically. By this he makes it easy for the reader to survey in broad outline and in an easily remembered form the manifold attempts and endeavors of all the forces in a particular period.

It is obvious what importance such a scholarly and continent-wide description of the evangelizing work and the planting of the Christian faith and the church must have for the person who has recognized the forward-surging attitude of the African continent in general and especially today.

The time has also come for our ecumenically speaking and acting contemporaries to tackle in such a work. They in particular must have time for this, since more or less fleeting encounters at conferences and occasional conversations provide too narrow a basis for real understanding, knowledge and action.

Walter Ringwald's book takes us into a special area. It is a book of particular value, and its contents and conclusions entitle it

to be of benefit to missionary work as a whole. Only one thing should be said from the outset: no work of scholarship should appear without a good index. That is what is missing here. Precisely when a book is valuable, the desire arises to look up after the first reading particular subjects, as for example, motives for becoming a Christian, in order to be able to get the full profit from such a good work.

The author turns to good account the knowledge he gained as a Basel missionary on the Gold Coast. There he was confronted with knowledge of God as Creator. He deals with other gods, with the veneration of the dead and with ancestor worship, with witchcraft and black magic, with the social life and morality of the Akan tribes. In doing this he performs for comparative religion and mission study a service which should be gratefully received, and an index would be a help to a permanent and full use of the book!

The second chapter has as its subject the processes of conversion. Here the problems of proclamation are illuminated. Every preacher can gain something from this presentation, because the problem of preaching is a general one. Then, in fine detail the author gives expositions on the conversion of the heathen, on the process of instruction, on rejection and opposition, and on the motives behind application for baptism, which are shown in their mixed character. Holy baptism is experienced as a "transition into another sphere of power".

A third chapter is devoted to the church won over from paganism. What happens in such a young church, what it lacks and what makes up its life, starting from the new perception of prayer up to the new kind of song, and much else, is well worth knowing. The reader is also instructed about the church and theology on the Gold Coast, and much can be learned from the thousand or so notes and the bibliography.

This book is one of the best in the field of mission literature. It must surely be of interest for many Christians to be spectators, as it were, of the growth of a young church and to get to know from close quarters the origin of the Christian life and of theological and ecclesiastical problems. Basically the problems are everywhere the same, so that everyone can learn from everything. For this reason there is less and

less "mission" literature that could be disregarded by Christians and competent theologians.

Max Warren's book on the Christian imperative is likewise based on a very fundamental and direct knowledge of present-day problems, particularly in Africa. It originated in a series of lectures which the author gave in February 1955 within the framework of the Kellogg Lectures at a theological seminary in the United States. The impressive strength of this work lies in the close connection of a biblical attitude with the present-days problems in the African and Asian churches.

The Christian imperative is above and beyond time. It meant and still means for Christians in the West and the East "Go"—to preach, to teach, to heal and to baptize! A consideration of the "how" of obedience concludes the whole, which at bottom is

nothing other than a concise theology of evangelism. But it is not in the least for just the few "mission people" in the alas so narrow sector known as "mission work" within an introverted church and theology, but for average readers of the Bible and church people whom all of it concerns, since all service of the church takes place on only one front.

In Dr. Warren's work everything is bound up with the Bible. But at the same time the basis is broad. Thus for example healing does not mean immediately and exclusively "medical mission", but it is applied to the whole life of the people. I can well imagine that these expositions could form an excellent foundation for lively discussions in classes in our theological faculties and theological seminaries. For Dr. Warren's voice is so loud that it can and should be heard far beyond the borders of the Anglican church!

Arno Lehmann

TOLERANCE

The reason for a Lutheran synod like the last Synod of the United Lutheran Church of Germany (VELKD) to chose "tolerance" as the theme for its yearly meeting from June 2-7, 1956, is not immediately comprehensible in the broad area of the ecumenical movement and world Lutheranism. The word "tolerance" took on its positive connotation in the Age of the Enlightenment in Central and Western Europe, and it is therefore only natural that it too easily and too quickly falls under the judgment which we — perhaps also too easily and too quickly — pass upon this era. It is then connected with the loss of religious and ecclesiastical substance; and tolerance appears to be the first — and when it is taken — irrevocable step toward unbelief.

In addition to these critical objections, which result from all of Christendom's reflection today on its history, there is an added criticism from the Anglo-Saxon world. Here the value of the "coin" tolerance, which for example in French or German public opinion is still unquestioned even today, has never been very high. Tolerance on the European continent won the day after many a difficult struggle as the only possible form of peace between the Roman Catholic church and the churches of the Reformation. It brought peace: ecclesiastical peace, but because of the state-church entanglement, political peace as well. The ecclesiastical and religious controversies took a totally different turn already in England, and by the time the "new world" entered into its great period of development these controversies had already been so nearly concluded that they no longer were able decisively to influence it. The long period of waiting for peace, and the demand arising out of responsibility and love to make use of this period of peace and during this time to get along with one another — precisely these specifically continental European elements which in fact only then make tolerance of real and unequivocal value, are still a bit strange to non-Europeans. In the United States the different denominations' getting along with one another, whose adherents for the most part had indeed emigrated from Europe under political and ecclesiastical pressure, was not oriented toward the slogan "tolerance". Tolerance here signifies primarily the fact that for reasons of lack of power, of opportunism or because it's just the way things are done, something is "tolerated" that one knows is actually bad.

How great the distance is between this understanding of the word and ecclesiastical and theological thought in Germany, on the other hand, can be seen from the peculiar fact that this last year three books on the theme of tolerance appeared there almost simultaneously.* All three proceed from the assumption that tolerance is something of value, and at least two of them — Hartmann's and Rüschi's — leave no doubt as to the ecclesiastical and confessional position of their authors.

There are beginning to appear in the European conception of tolerance, however, certain traits which, at least in the thought of the last two or three centuries, have not played an essential or even dominant role. One is beginning to discover tolerance as the area of conversation with the other person, as the absolute renunciation of political power, but however — and that is what is decisive — as the presupposition for a genuine intellectual controversy.

But in this way the concept of tolerance becomes a peculiarly clear mark of today's ecumenical situation as a whole. Certainly since the Enlightenment this concept has changed in the consciousness of men. For it has become clear to these men that truth is not to be found apart from the churches struggling with each other, be it in thinking about ethical problems or in some kind of non-denominational Christianity consisting of the love of neighbor, but rather it is to be found only in this very struggle. "Coming to terms with the Roman Catholic church only then will become really serious", as K. E. Skydsgaard said a few years ago, "when . . . research . . . and . . . thought on both sides approach so closely to one another that the difference can no longer be compared to a desert across which one

* Albert Hartmann, S. J., *Toleranz und christlicher Glaube* [Tolerance and the Christian faith], Frankfurt/Main: Verlag Joseph Knecht, 1955.

Ernst Gerhard Rüschi, *Toleranz, eine theologische Untersuchung und eine aktuelle Auseinandersetzung* [Tolerance, a theological study and a relevant coming to terms], Zollikon-Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag AG, 1955.

Gustav Mensching, *Toleranz und Wahrheit in der Religion* [Tolerance and truth in religion], Heidelberg: Verlag Quelle und Meyer, 1955.

cannot call to one another, but to a narrow but deep abyss across which one finds it necessary to speak as directly as possible." And he adds, "It may be that both parties for the first time since their separation four hundred years ago are drawing as close to one another as they were only in the very moment of their separation."

But what is said here about Catholic-Evangelical controversial theology is true in the same way also of the togetherness of the churches in the World Council or of the connections with the free-church and Orthodox groups outside of the World Council, and it is also true of the relationship of the member churches of the Lutheran World Federation among themselves. The ecumenical movement does not release one from seeking after truth nor from standing for the truth. Rather it obligates precisely to both — to tolerance and to confession.

Hans Bolewski

EDITORIAL NOTES

The existence of the Church of South India puts questions to both the ecumenical and in particular to the Lutheran world. These have been waiting to be taken up in this journal for quite some time. We hope that the comprehensive survey of Dr. Vilmos Vajta, Geneva, in this issue might start a discussion to which we would like to include further comments in future. Therefore we would like to ask our readers to send us any critical comments they might have.

The article by Dean Ragnar Askmark, Göteborg, on the question of apostolic succession is closely connected with the problem in South India and should likewise receive further treatment.

The essay by Professor Wilhelm Hahn, is of immediate practical significance for Lutheran missionary work and even more so for the newly created overseas congregations which form the framework of the resettlement program of the Lutheran World Federation.

For the first time we are introducing in this issue a feature entitled "Correspondence". We would appreciate comments — also critical ones — from our readers on the problems mentioned above. The journal is designed to be a forum for discussion, and we invite our readers to make use as much as possible of this opportunity on an international level.

For reasons of space a number of significant contributions to our journal can only appear in the autumn issue. Among others we mention here "Basilius and the Dogma of the Holy Spirit", by Professor Hermann Dörries; "Church und Industry in the United States", by Dr. Theodore J. Pretzlaff; "The Translation of the Lutheran Confessions in Czechoslovakia", by Otto Vizner; "Trends in the Christian Movement in Japan", by Professor Sigurd Aske.

In this issue we are presenting for the first time with particular pleasure a report on the church in Hungary by Pastor Károly Hafenscher of Budapest. And we draw your special attention to the article by Professor Georg Hoffmann on "Conscription and Conscientious Objection in Germany".

The following have contributed book reviews: Dr. Gunnar Hillerdal, Lund; Professor Hermann Dörries, Göttingen; Dr. Gottfried Hornig, Lund; Professor Ernst Kinder, Münster; Dr. August Kimme, Leipzig; Dr. Gert Otto, Loccum; and Professor Arno Lehmann, Halle.

